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ABSTRACT

This theme issue of "Educational Foundations" contains five articles that utilize an array of foundational perspectives that give reader insight into the organization of schools, the viewpoints of children and parents, the ideological and political nature of community organizing, and mathematics instruction in the Soviet Union. In "Cooperative Learning: Liberatory Praxis or Hamburger Helper," Mara Sapon-Shevin critically examines the incongruities between the assumptions informing cooperative learning practices and the institutional norms governing the organization of schools, universities, and colleges. Ruthanne Kurth-Schai's "Educational Systems Design by Children for Children" challenges scholars and researchers in educational foundations to allow children to influence processes of policy design and evaluation. Lorraine Harner and Helen Davis's work, "Points of View: Parent-Teacher Talk," is a dialogue and "meta-view" authored by a parent and a teacher, who each describe their recollections of the parent-teacher conference in which they had participated. In his essay, "Pedagogy, Community Organizing, and American Neopopulism," Stephen Haymes argues in agreement with critical theorists that pedagogy as a form of cultural politics involves defining and redefining an ideological map of the cultural territory. Haymes applies this notion to the process of community organizing to illustrate the "emancipating possibilities" of a "value-based" approach to community organizing. In "Educating Mathematicians in the USSR," Beverly J. Ferruci, Richard Evans, and Oleg V. Anashkin present their analysis of the mathematics program of study at Simferopol University as a "model to emulate." (DB)

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Theme: Utilizing Foundational Perspectives

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Editorial Overview

Educational Foundatons seeks to help fulfill the stated mission of the American Educational Studies Association to enhance scholarship in and among the educational foundations disciplines by providing a vehicle for publication of articles and essays which feature analysis of the foundations, of foundations methodology, of applications of such methodology to key issues of the day, and of significant research which evolves from and unifies the foundations disciplines, all focusing on the interdisciplinary nature of the educational foundations fields.

Educational Foundations seeks articles and essays in four primary areas:

1. Exposition on the nature of the educational foundations--essays exploring the foundations, highlighting definition, interrelationships, strengths, difficulties, and other aspects of the combined fields.
2. Application of the foundations disciplines to an issue of significance--collections of articles around a specified theme, bringing to bear the nature of the various foundations disciplines on such themes. Information concerning themes for future issues of the journal may be obtained from the co-editors.
3. Methodology--articles exploring methodological issues of the foundations fields, stressing similarities and differences among the disciplines.
4. Research--articles describing or reporting on new research in the foundations fields, with emphasis on interdisciplinary aspects of such research.

Contributions to ***Educational Foundations*** are solicited from members of the American Educational Studies Association as well as from all other scholars in the foundations of education and related fields of study. While the journal is open to submissions from all interested scholars, the standards for review and acceptance of articles and essays are stringent. Submissions should follow the *Chicago Manual of Style*, with a suggested length of 25-30 doubled-spaced pages, and be sent in triplicate to: Kathryn M. Borman, Co-Editor, ***Educational Foundations***, College of Education, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio 45221. When an article is accepted, authors are asked to submit the final version of their article on computer disk, preferably 5-1/4 inch, IBM-compatible computer disk in either WordPerfect format or as an ascii textfile, with as few formatting commands as possible.

Introduction: Utilizing Foundational Perspectives

In this issue of *Educational Foundations*, five manuscripts utilizing an array of foundational perspectives present the reader with insight into the organization of schools, the viewpoints of children and parents, the ideological and political nature of community organizing, and mathematics instruction in the Soviet Union. Wherever you may be this summer, the editorial staff and board of the journal trust that you will find this issue's contents important reading.

Mara Sapon-Shevin in "Cooperative Learning: Liberatory Praxis or Hamburger Helper" critically examines the incongruities between the assumptions informing cooperative learning practices and the institutional norms governing the organization of schools, universities, and colleges. Sapon-Shevin concludes by providing examples from her course, Introduction to Teaching and Learning, in which she and her preservice teachers explore the contradictions between creating a cooperative classroom community and doing so in a competitive context.

Ruthanne Kurth-Schai's "Educational Systems Design by Children for Children" challenges scholars and researchers in educational foundations to allow children to influence processes of policy design and evaluation. In her study of elementary school children, Kurth-Schai applied the Delphi technique to generate responses that focused on two school- and classroom-level changes, multi-aging and "rescheduling," a process that had reduced class size to allow for more individual attention to students. Her results show that children's insights contribute importantly to an understanding of learning environments.

Lorraine Harner and Helen Davis' work, "Points of View: Parent-Teacher Talk," is a dialogue and "meta-view" authored by a parent and a teacher, who each describe their recollections of the parent-teacher conference in which they had participated. Their differing orientations provide the lenses through which the following issues are identified: 1) the culture of commercial curriculum packages, 2) a child's subjectivity and school acculturation, 3) professionalization of relationships, and 4) intimate versus objective communication modes. These issues are addressed in "meta-view" sections, which represent a synthesis and critique of the parent's and teacher's perspectives after they had written their own individual points of view.

In his essay, "Pedagogy, Community Organizing, and American Neopopulism," Steven Haymes argues in agreement with critical thoughts that pedagogy as a form of cultural politics involves defining and redefining an ideological map of the cultural territory. Haymes applies this notion to the process of community organizing to illustrate the "emancipating possibilities" of a "value-based" approach to community organizing. In this way, Haymes moves beyond the notion of community organizing put forward by "neopopulists" such as Boyle and others.

Finally, Beverly J. Ferrucci, Richard Evans, and Oleg V. Anashkin draw our attention to the education of mathematics majors in the Soviet Union. In "Educating Mathematicians in the USSR," the authors present their analysis of the mathematics program of study at Simferopol State University as a "model to emulate." Whether or not wholesale adoption of the Soviet curriculum by U.S. institutions of higher education is desirable, readers will find the documentation of the educational process presented here extremely informative.

--Kathryn M. Borman
Co-Editor

Educational Foundations, Summer 1991

Cooperative Learning: Liberatory Praxis or Hamburger Helper

By Mara Sapon-Shevin

Mara Sapon-Shevin is a faculty member with the Center for Teaching and Learning, The University of North Dakota, Grand Forks.

Cooperative learning, a teaching strategy in which children or adults work in small groups to accomplish a specific task, has quickly become one of the most frequently written about and enthusiastically espoused "new approaches" in education. As such, large numbers of practicing teachers have been "in-serviced" in this area, and many programs of teacher education now include some exposure to cooperative learning strategies within their methods coursework.

This paper briefly addresses the following questions:

> What are the typical rationales presented for implementing cooperative learning in classrooms, and how do they define what gets taught to pre-service teachers? What is the canon of cooperative learning and how does that get established?

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What else might be taught about cooperative learning, particularly if we wanted students to understand cooperative learning's foundational base and its potential for transforming schools and society as well as its practical applications?

What gets in the way of our thinking about other dimensions or parameters of cooperative learning and teaching those things to our students?

and, lastly

What are the effects--on our students and on us--of reducing cooperative learning to an effective teaching strategy evaluated by improved academic achievement rather than as a way to radically restructure education and address social and economic inequities?

Promoting Cooperative Learning: Veiled Assumptions, Limited Possibilities

The most common rationales for using cooperative learning in the classroom are that it boosts student achievement and improves social interactions. Because students are working together, generally in heterogeneous groups, and because their learning (and often the consequences of their achievement) are interrelated, cooperative learning has shown positive outcomes in self-esteem, intergroup relations, acceptance of academically handicapped students, and attitudes towards school and education.

Not all cooperative learning is alike, however, and the cooperative learning label now embraces a wide range of methods and philosophies. Slavin's (1983a, 1983b) cooperative learning methods, for example, stress the importance of group goals and individual accountability, and many of his methods use inter-group competition and extrinsic rewards for group achievement. Johnson and Johnson's (1987) method, *Learning Together*, on the other hand, focuses more on the teaching and acquisition of social skills and encourages extensive group processing of the cooperative learning experience. Aronson and colleagues' (1978) *Jigsaw Method* involves dividing the material to be learned among group members who take turns teaching their material to the group, stressing mutual responsibility and connectedness.

The apparent diversity in the structures of these methods reflects even greater differences in the importance and status given to varying outcomes (achievement, social skills, group cohesiveness) and the extent to which practitioners and researchers are encouraged to explore questions which go beyond superficial evaluations of effectiveness[1] to more serious explorations of the many choices which practitioners make. The evaluation questions asked, for example, which often center on improving student achievement and maintaining classroom discipline, take for granted certain underlying assumptions related to the goals and purposes of schooling and the role of teachers and students within classrooms. Asking, for example, what cooperative learning strategies best improve student achievement assumes that student achievement--measured by some objective test--is a valid measure of school success, assumes that high test scores will be beneficial to students in the long run, and are a reasonable way of addressing gross racial and class inequities in student achievement. Evaluating the relative efficiency of various forms of cooperative learning for classroom management assumes that teacher control of classrooms is normative and desirable, without examining notions of student empowerment, or the importance of preparing students to be responsible democratic citizens, capable of choice making and responsibility.

Broadening the Discourse: Challenging Assumptions, Asking Harder Questions

In a recent article entitled "Selling Cooperative Learning without Selling It Short," (Sapon-Shevin and Schniedewind, 1989-90), Nancy Schniedewind and I explored the ways in which cooperative learning is typically promoted, and the kinds of questions which have become central to discussions and evaluations of its use. We noted there and elsewhere (Sapon-Shevin and Schniedewind, 1991a, 1991b) that cooperative learning is generally presented as a teaching and classroom organizational strategy--a new way of teaching the standard curriculum--and, with few exceptions, the potential for using cooperative learning to restructure the broader educational system and society is rarely explored. The current rhetoric and practice of cooperative learning leaves many assumptions about schools and education unexamined, still intact and tightly packed. There are, however, a whole different set of issues and questions one might want to explore relative to the theory and practice of cooperative learning, and these questions are essentially foundational ones, those best explored through a contextual understanding of schools and society.

One might consider asking questions at both the broader, macro level (the relationship between cooperation and schools and society) and at the more pragmatic, micro level (the applications of cooperative learning within classrooms). At the macro level, these questions might include the following:

> What are the historical antecedents of cooperative learning, and how does cooperative learning fit within current economic and political perspectives? What is the current appeal of cooperative learning and why has it been so heartily embraced?
>
> To what extent is cooperative learning compatible with current national educational reforms including a focus on testing and excellence?

> What aspects of schooling and pedagogy would be impacted by reconceptualizing education as a cooperative endeavor? How would the current sorting and evaluative functions which are a product of a competitive framework of education be affected by transforming our educational system cooperatively?

Answers to these questions might lead us into an exploration of the apparent contradictions between the current push for excellence and the widespread adoption of a pedagogy which purports to support heterogeneity and equity and success for all learners. We would need to discuss the variations in the analysis and interpretation of cooperative learning, a term which includes teams-based, extrinsically-rewarded instructional management programs (Slavin, 1983; Slavin, Madden and Stevens, 1989/90) and radical critiques of our competitive educational system and our capitalist economic system (Kohn, 1986). And we would have to consider the potential for using cooperative learning as a framework for thinking about differential allocation of societal resources (money and power) and school resources such as teacher time, instructional programs, and educational capital.

At a micro level, one might ask questions like the following:

> What are the implications of implementing a cooperative teaching strategy for what gets taught? Should there be some compatability between one's methodology and one's content? Do we continue to teach about wars and famous men cooperatively without examining the content itself?
>
> How compatible is a focus on cooperative learning with other aspects of classroom organization and structure, including grading, classroom management and gender roles? What happens when teachers implement cooperative learning in classrooms which are racially unbalanced, which promote sexist practices and which grade and rank students for the honor roll?
>
> What is the function and role of competition and the use of extrinsic rewards within cooperative learning? What messages do students learn about cooperation if they work in competitive teams and are awarded prizes?
>
> How can cooperative learning be used to empower individual teachers and students as well as to model democracy and participatory management? Could students--and teachers--be given control over their own learning and evaluation?

Answers to these questions would involve an exploration of the formal and hidden curricula of both traditional instruction and of cooperative learning, and of the potential for rethinking many of the existing instructional, social, and managerial patterns within our classrooms. Teachers would need to grapple with the relationship between their own disempowerment (top-down curriculum models and hierarchical school decision-making) and the student empowerment implicit within cooperative learning. Teacher educators would need to explore the contexts within which they teach and how these interact with their espoused pedagogy and practice.

Although these questions might be considered essential to a full understanding of the history and potential of cooperative learning as a pedagogical strategy, they are not typically asked or addressed by those who provide instruction on this topic (Sapon-Shevin and Schniedewind, 1989). How do we move from talking about and teaching about cooperative learning as an effective teaching strategy (which it is), to asking teachers to reflect about the ways in which schools are organized, the reward structures which guide our behavior, beliefs about how and why people learn which shape our current practices, and the possible broad-ranging political, economic, and structural changes which might follow our thoughtful implementation of principles of cooperation, mutual empowerment, shared decision-making, and respect for diversity and heterogeneity? In short, how do we make the questions just raised part of our instruction in cooperative learning?

Failing to Ask Difficult Questions:
How We Collude in Our Own Disempowerment

Is it a matter of mere omission that certain issues are addressed and others ignored, or does something get in the way of asking and attempting to answer these questions? I argue here that the way in which cooperative learning has been taught and replicated in the "educational marketplace" has resulted in its depoliticization--its distancing from cultural, social, economic, and historical contexts--and that this process of depoliticization has been reproduced within schools of teacher education. I argue further that the very content of cooperative learning makes its full implementation and exploration problematic, contradictory, and almost inevitably partial; what is often described as students' resistance to foundational knowledge in teacher education is more accurately our own discomfort with the full contextualization of what we teach, how we teach, and why, a discomfort framed by educational structures which encourage us to disassociate our pedagogy from our values.

One of the major impediments to careful and thoughtful explorations of the sociological and psychological underpinnings of cooperative learning and the full implications of cooperative learning strategies for transforming schools and education is the relatively "easy" accessibility of the principles and practice of cooperative learning. Cooperative learning is viewed by many as easy to teach and easy to implement.

A leading cooperative learning researcher has asserted that one of the appeals of cooperative learning is that you don't have to change most of what you do; you still teach the same material in the same way, and still test students individually--

all that is different is that you have students practice the material in heterogeneous small groups (Sapon-Shevin and Schniedewind, 1989-90). To teachers overwhelmed by competing agendas and excessive demands on their time, such a characterization may hold some appeal, the appeal of making cooperative learning immediately accessible and applicable in classrooms; but it is hardly conducive to thoughtful reflectivity and practice, nor does it address the unique and excitingly transformative possibilities of cooperative learning. Unfortunately, this parsimonious way of viewing cooperative learning--as a technique easily described and mastered--is highly consistent with one of the aftermaths of the national reports--a growing sense of urgency to find and implement "best practice" or be left behind.

Rather than viewing cooperative learning as having been depoliticized, perhaps it has actually been repoliticized to an alternate political agenda; decontextualized, rewards-based, administratively-controlled cooperative learning is actually quite compatible with the current focus on excellence, teacher-management, and the concurrent de-emphasis on equity issues. At the most recent National Symposium on Cooperative Learning, held in January 1990, many of the teachers attending were sent by their administration to learn about cooperative learning in two days so that they could go back and "in-service" their entire districts. This sense of urgency, coupled with a belief that there is a set of best practices which are definable and reproducible, leads to what I would characterize as frenzy-learning--rapid and uncritical acquisition and implementation--typified by not only a lack of thoughtfulness and reflectivity about the content and process of cooperative learning, but by a clear failure to consider the potential of cooperative learning as empowering or critical pedagogy or as a transformative educational process. The packaging of cooperative learning like frozen dinners--ready to use in just minutes--exacerbates a tendency towards superficiality and thoughtlessness.

Not surprisingly, this same scenario has been re-enacted within schools of education. In a relatively brief period of time, cooperative learning has become *de rigueur* within teacher education programs, and many of the newest methods textbooks contain sections on cooperative learning. Thus, teacher educators must also quickly master cooperative learning as a strategy so that they can adequately instruct prospective teachers in its use. The idea that the canon of cooperative learning exists as an objective, quantifiable, describable set of information and practices which can be--must be--mastered before one can be called *au courant* in the field of education is, again, highly compatible with the transformation of teacher education programs to reflect a pre-specified knowledge base of teacher education which must be transmitted. The deskilling of teacher educators which is a result of asking them to master and then transmit the knowledge base of teaching is thus harmonious with the "containerization" of cooperative learning, and further fuels that deskilling.

The need to quickly master cooperative learning and insert it within a program--rather than to view it contextually and as embedded within foundational and societal structures--is further exacerbated by the ways in which teachers and teacher educators are generally taught about cooperative learning, generally in relatively brief in-services or workshops. In discussing the future of cooperative learning, Slavin states that "[a] danger inherent in the success of cooperative learning is that the methods will be oversold and undertrained." (Slavin, 1989/90, p. 3). Although this kind of salesmanship language is not unique to cooperative learning, it is sadly reflective of what is going on in the field--selling is what one does with commodities and products, not with ideas or theories. And training is what one gives to people or species considered too limited for education.

Cooperative learning has become highly marketable, profitable for those who provide the training, and has led to considerable entrepreneurship, including what can be described as cooperative learning franchises and the staking of territory--in some instances, a district that has been "in-serviced" by one cooperative learning outside expert is then ineligible for future "training" by competing organizations or models. Cooperative learning is fast becoming a commodity, a product, rather than a way of thinking about teaching and classrooms. Since teachers tend to teach as they were taught (and what they were taught), viewing cooperative learning as something which is sold and trained, defines both the preparation teachers are given and limits teachers' subsequent abilities to share cooperative learning with others they teach, including pre-service teachers.

At one level, the ways in which cooperative learning has been conceptualized and presented is consistent with the kinds of educational packaging to which schools and school districts are often attracted. Districts that once had their teachers "Hunterized," now can have their districts "cooperatized." Quick-fix strategies within schools are not new, and in some ways, cooperative learning is simply the latest of the patent medicines which promises to cure all--the problems of mainstreaming, desegregation, tracking, classroom management, gifted education, and teacher burnout.

In some ways, the limited practice and exploration of cooperative learning is no more (or less) lamentable than the distortion and partiality of other exciting curricular reforms, such as open classrooms or whole language. But innovations should be measured by their transformatory potential, and thus the limited conceptualization of cooperative learning represents a substantial loss; cooperative learning has the potential to radically alter the content and process of education, and to address critical issues of school and student diversity, possibilities too important to be easily abandoned.

Unfortunately, this quick-fix mentality has also affected teacher education programs, as evidenced by the growing belief in a knowledge base for teaching and teacher education. The reduction of cooperative learning to a set of teaching techniques or strategies is consistent with attempts to make teaching more professional by including in teachers' behavioral repertoires a strategy which has been empirically researched and validated. But as Ayers (1988) argues, rather than professionalizing education, "the knowledge base project may in fact have a prescriptive and constraining effect on teaching" (p.28). Making cooperative learning part of the knowledge base of teacher education would require its full contextualization within historical, political, and sociological frameworks--rather than reducing it to one of many "useful" teaching strategies or using it to replace other strategies uncritically.

Recent discussions of the ebbing away of foundational bases for teacher education have addressed this same reductionist tendency, the focus on efficiency rather than on context (Doyle, 1990) and on the nature of instruction rather than the community in which that instruction takes place (Soltis, 1990). In calling for the centrality of foundational concerns within teacher education, Shulman writes:

> We must use what we call the foundations to create vivid, compelling images of the possible in education, images of the long-term moral as well as intellectual possibilities of being an educated person in a good society (p. 305).

In many ways, cooperative learning provides an ideal entree into an exploration of the "possible" in education, of the moral ramifications of education, of the multiple layers of questions which must be addressed if we are to envision the kinds of learning communities of which Dewey spoke. Cooperative learning can provide a framework for thinking about how power is allocated, how decisions are made, how multiple perspectives can be heard and validated. Cooperative learning can allow us to create participatory communities, classroom models of democracy, spaces for discourse and the critical examination of the ways in which certain voices are silenced by the our current models of schooling and government.

But it is exactly this possibility--that cooperative learning can open up new ways of seeing schools and the world--which makes it difficult for educators to explore the full ramifications of an educational system based on cooperation. The kinds of questions which we would need to address--which might be raised by students--are overpowering ones, ones which have the potential to radically reorient our teaching and our lives. Thus, these are scary questions, ones not easily asked, not superficially answered. Furthermore, envisioning a more cooperative world, abandoning traditional teaching structures in order to empower students, and reconceptualizing our educational system cooperatively all run counter to our own histories and to the contexts within which we teach.

Almost all successful academics are products of competitive school structures: we were the kids who won the spelling bees, who wrote the best essays, who got the high grades, graduated with honors, and were admitted to prestigious graduate schools. Competition served many of us well, or at least appeared to do so. And now, we function within colleges and universities which still tend to reward individual achievement over collaboration, which reproduce hierarchical, often patriarchal, structures of power and leadership, and which isolate us in our own subspecialties. In a paper entitled "On Being Cooperative in Noncooperative Places," Gelb (1989) talks about requirements for competitive grading within many institutions, the competitive ranking of faculty members for promotion and merit, and the overriding competitive job market, all of which form part of the competitive context in which we implore our students to be cooperative. He writes:

> It is from this perspective, as survivors in a competitive, Hobbesian academic world, that we look out upon our teacher candidates, enmeshed within their own competitive histories and current competitive constraints, and attempt to induce cooperative attitudes and understanding in them (p. 8).

Not only do we function within these settings, but we instruct students and do research within these same contexts; we decide the curriculum (even if that curriculum is cooperative learning), we make the majority of decisions regarding pedagogy and classroom structures (even if those are cooperative learning groups), and we assign grades (even if these are assigned to groups rather than individuals). And, an increasing number of educators "do research" on cooperative learning and compete for training opportunities, and argue about the relative merits of various models of cooperative learning (Johnson and Johnson, 1989; Slavin, 1988, 1989). Even those educators who claim to be engaged in critical, liberatory, or emancipatory pedagogy (with which cooperative learning is certainly consonant), must acknowledge that the context within which we work make those claims at best, partial, at worst, deceptive. Ellsworth (1989) writes:

> As educators who claim to be dedicated to ending oppression, critical pedagogues have acknowledged the socially constructed and legitimated authority that teachers/professors hold over students. Yet theorists of critical pedagogy have failed to launch any meaningful analysis of or program for reformulating the institutionalized power imbalances between themselves and their students, or of the essentially paternalistic project of education itself. In the absence of such an analysis and program, their efforts are limited to trying to transform negative effects of power imbalances within the classroom into positive ones. Strategies such as student empowerment and dialogue give the illusion of equality while in fact leaving the authoritarian nature of the teacher/student relationship intact (p. 306).

Reclaiming Power:
Sharing Our Struggles with our Students

A full exploration of cooperative learning--its origins, possibilities, and power--would require, if not changes in, at least an acknowledgement of the competitive context in which we do our educating. If cooperative learning has been easy to "sell" to teachers because it doesn't involve changing that much of what they do, perhaps it has been easy to sell to teacher educators for the same reason. And, conversely, if teacher educators were to embrace cooperative learning as more than a new recipe from the knowledge base cookbook, it would involve changing much of what they do. As teacher educators we would have to rethink how we grade students, how our teaching and evaluation practices feed the sorting mechanism of colleges, and the ways in which we collude with the very practices and policies we critique. We would have to explore, with students, our own disempowerment as faculty members, and the ways in which we are kept apart and isolated from one another. We would have to share our own responses to top-down impositions of change, such as those initiated by outside groups such as Holmes, and the related deskilling which accompanies the requirement that we "cover" the knowledge base of teacher education. We would have to discuss the ways in which university structures differentially serve the needs of different groups, and the ways in which certain students and faculty are marginalized and made powerless. And we would have to be honest about the limits of our emancipatory pedagogy--both those imposed by the structures in which we operate--we can espouse that "none of us is as smart as all of us" but can give only some students As--and the limits imposed by our own histories.

Like many teacher educators, I have my pre-service teachers do most of their work in cooperative learning groups. Together, students work on class presentations, share readings and questions, and prepare for exams. What I consider more important, however, is that I share with my students not only why I am having them work in cooperative groups, but together we explore and share why it is difficult for us, what assumptions about individuality and collectivity we bring to the classroom, and how our social and educational histories have ill-prepared us for working together cooperatively. I also share with them the constraints on my own teaching and the ways in which I struggle with the inconsistencies between my desire to create a supportive community and some of the realities of university teaching and evaluation.

In my "Introduction to Teaching and Learning" class, for example, I work very hard to create a community. Students lead songs each morning, we begin each class by sharing what is "New and Good" in our lives, student support groups were formed during the first week of class, I have encouraged students to contact one another for help and support with academic and social problems, and I continually search for ways of building trust and communication in the group. Then, however, comes the midterm. Although students are encouraged to prepare for the exam together and are given complete study guides, the test is taken individually, and evaluation, although not competitive, is individual.

Do students notice the inconsistency? Are they aware of the contradictions between my espoused desire for classroom community and the implications of an individual exam? Yes, of course they are. And they are encouraged to reflect on my teacher behavior, the choices I have made, and their own feelings about the process. One of the questions on the midterm asked students to reflect on our classroom community: how it had been created, how it was working for them, and what implications they saw for their own teaching. One student wrote on her exam: "I feel very comfortable in this class, but it is a class, so that means passing or failure. No matter how hard anyone tries, school will always cause a fear of failure in students. ...You saw this fear when you walked in this morning. Your community was overthrown by fear of the exam. You have not produced this fear, our school system has. You have done a great job of making everyone feel comfortable." The next day, when the midterm was returned, I shared this comment with the class and initiated a discussion: why had the midterm been so incongruent with our regular class values? They responded that it was the first thing they had done individually rather than cooperatively, they talked about their fear, they talked about the role of competition in evaluation and as a challenge to relationships, they acknowledged the difference in my role that day, away from teacher and friend, and towards evaluator. I shared with the class my dilemma, one which they might also confront as teachers: how could we maintain a classroom community of trust and support when I was about to return differentially evaluated exams? How could they respond to people who had done better than they had? Worse? What alternatives were there to grading and evaluation? Why did I persist with giving individual exams?

All of these questions were difficult, but our dialogue was honest and forthright. Several students actually acknowledged my discomfort and supported me; one commented, "If I did badly on the exam, I'd be upset because I studied hard, but I wouldn't be angry at you." Maybe they should be angry with me, I challenged. Maybe there was something wrong with the system and with their willingness to accept it. It is this kind of dialogue which I believe is essential if we are to realize the full potential of cooperative learning. We must be willing to call into question all aspects of our educational system, both the schools for which we prepare teachers, and the schools in which we offer that preparation. Although we often lament our students' impatience with theory and their desire for learning something "useful," how much of what we perceive as their reluctance to engage in discussions of "abstractions" is actually our own discomfort with being politically explicit, our own fears that if we are honest about the contexts of our own teaching and thinking, our own uncertainties and vulnerabilities, that we will somehow lose professional credibility and stature. Certainly the limited ways in which cooperative learning is defined and taught have limited our own conceptions of its full meaning, but we have also cooperated in decontextualizing, dumbing-down, circumscribing our own teaching and learning.

Bigelow (1990) says that all teachers are partisan and political and that they must acknowledge this to their students; Ellsworth argues that "critical pedagogues are always implicated in the very structures they are trying to change'' (p. 310). If this is so--that we are inevitably part of the problem even as we struggle to be part of the solution--then the best we can do is to be honest with our students about the political agendas which drive our lives and theirs. Certainly we should continue to implement and teach about cooperative learning, but let us do it in a way that pushes the limits of what schooling is for, of why some students do well and others don't, and about the effects of these inequalities. Even when it is personally difficult for us, even when it exposes our own inconsistencies, our own limitations, let us be honest and self-critical. Only through such honest self-reflection can our struggles be shared, and only through such sharing can we begin to overcome the limitations which keep us from our dreams.

Note

1. For a more complete analysis of the origins and current practice of cooperative learning, see Sapon-Shevin, M. and Schniedewind, N., ''If cooperative learning's the answer, what are the questions?'' (1991) in *Journal of Education*, Vol. 173.

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Educational Systems Design by Children for Children

By Ruthanne Kurth-Schai

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After a decade of heightened public interest and participation in guiding the development of educational policy, the potential of school-age youth to contribute to this process remains largely unacknowledged and unexplored. The 80s produced a flurry of national reports, all expressing serious concern for the future of youth and society, and suggesting ways in which educational policy and practice might be altered to address such concerns.[1]

Although the reports are criticized for failure to understand and to promote the needs and aspirations of women, people of color, and the economically disadvantaged (Grant & Sleeter, 1985; Apple, 1987; Tetreault & Schmuck, 1985), the extent to which they promote assumptions and values concerning the nature of schooling that are centered in adult experiences and perceptions--rather than children's--is not addressed. Although egalitarian approaches to policy design and evaluation are increasingly advocated, young students are rarely offered opportunities for full participation.

The consequences of excluding school-age youth from debate and decision-making concerning important educational issues are quite serious. Results of prior research suggest that administrative policies which deny students opportunities to participate in guiding the educational process are associated with student apathy, disillusionment, disciplinary problems, and poor academic performance (Glasser, 1986; McNiel, 1986; Goodlad, 1984). Further, the prevalence of such practices in the schools reinforces broader societal patterns which exclude young people from active and meaningful participation in the social and political life of contemporary communities. In light of prevailing adult assumptions and expectations, the social presence of children is inconsequential, their potential to contribute invisible.[2] The consequences of perpetuating images of youth as socially useless include low self-esteem, lack of social commitment, and the expression of self-destructive and anti-social behaviors including drug abuse, depression, promiscuity, premature parenthood, suicide, and delinquency (Elkind, 1978; Kagan, 1984; Ferrarotti, 1981; Glasser, 1986).

Youth, and our society as a whole, are further disadvantaged as theory building, evaluation, and policy development in education is impaired by excluding insights children can provide into processes of teaching and learning--insights which are not accessible to adults (Weinstein, 1983; Duke, 1987; Cullingford, 1987; Reifel, 1988; Paley, 1986; LaBonty & Danielson, 1988). As children's opportunities to share their perceptions and preferences are restricted or omitted, the possibility of understanding and responding appropriately to their complex and varied educational needs and interests is diminished. An essential source of **foundational knowledge**--of interpretive, normative, and critical perspectives on education--is overlooked and underutilized. To the extent that this continues, present and future attempts at innovation and reform are likely to achieve only limited success.

In light of the preceding, when asked to investigate the influence of two organizational innovations on the quality of classroom life in elementary school settings, my colleague and I chose to actively involve students, along with their teachers, in evaluating important aspects of their current learning environments and in identifying factors essential to the design of very positive ones.[3]

In approaching this task we adopted a cultural paradigm for classroom process. Drawing largely from biocultural learning theory,[4] we defined humans as social learners who learn best through social methods in social groups. Each classroom is conceived of as a **learning culture** in which students and teachers work together to build and maintain an environment conducive to the accomplishment of a variety of complex tasks--including academic tasks, motivational tasks (desire to learn, self-concept), and social tasks (skills necessary to survive, prosper, and contribute to contemporary society).

Learning, from this perspective, is conceived as an interactive community-based process. Thus, both students and teachers play a significant role in shaping the classroom's learning culture--their interaction determines classroom goals, processes, activities, and atmospheres. To thoroughly understand the nature of a learning environment, it is essential to know how the thoughts and values of students and teachers contribute to its structure. As both the actual and potential influence of teachers on processes of educational design and evaluation are widely discussed in current literature (e.g., Giroux, 1988; McNeil, 1986; Wangberg, 1987; Shuell et al., 1988), this paper will focus on the contributions of young students. More specifically, from the perspective of children, what factors are most important in promoting learning?--how appropriate is current educational policy and practice to their needs and aspirations?--in what ways could current policy and practice be enhanced?

Methodology

In selecting a method to construct holistic representations of students' conceptual and value systems, several considerations were important. From a cultural perspective, representation of group perception and opinion is most appropriately constructed through a process that is **inclusive** and **interactive**. Rather than accepting the aggregate of a small number of individual conceptual statements as representative of the whole, it is important to solicit and synthesize contributions from the entire community of research participants through a process that encourages exchange of ideas and reconsideration of initial impressions in light of the opinions expressed by others. In order to be interactive and inclusive, the process must also be **egalitarian**. If children are to fully participate, status and power differentials among children, and perhaps most importantly those between children and adults, must not be reinforced in processes of data collection and analysis.

Further, representation of group perception and opinion is most appropriately constructed through a process that is **adaptive**. It is important to revise the wording or focus of questions, to introduce new issues for consideration, etc., as directed by initial responses of the research participants in order to more clearly reflect their conceptual patterns and values. Similarly, it is important to ensure that the research process is both **developmentally appropriate**--reflecting performance expectations that are realistic yet not limiting regardless of the age of the research participant, and **context-appropriate**--in this case, workable within the constraints of contemporary classroom settings.

In light of these considerations we selected the Delphi, a standard method of futures research, whereby issues are presented for group consideration through a process that is interactive yet confidential (Linstone & Turoff, 1975). Participants respond individually and anonymously to open-ended and/or forced-choice questions asked repetitively over a series of rounds. In order to catalyze further thought and deliberation concerning the issues at hand, between rounds panelists are provided feedback describing the collective response. Questions may be revised, added, or deleted as appropriate throughout the data collection process. The process is continued until either a predetermined level of agreement is achieved or it is evident that the issues have been fully considered.[5]

The Delphi described here was used to solicit children's perspectives as part of a larger evaluative study conducted at Maple Grove and West Hill elementary schools. Both schools are located in a relatively trouble free school district in the mid-sized upper midwestern city of Waterton.[6] Maple Grove was experimenting for the first time with **multi-aging**, a non-traditional organizational pattern whereby students across an age span of two to four years are grouped and taught within the same classroom. West Hill had entered the second year of an innovative program referred to as **rescheduling**. Class size was significantly reduced and individualized attention increased for part of each school day by reallocating existing school staff including both regular classroom teachers and special education faculty. Several of the fourth/fifth-grade classrooms at West Hill combined rescheduling with multi-aging because of variations in the number of students by grade level.

Approximately 350 third- through fifth-grade students, along with their 16 teachers, agreed to participate in the Delphi in order to (a) assist the district in evaluating the success of each innovation, and (b) identify and then express their opinions on issues of importance to the education of elementary school children. Systematic observations of each classroom were also conducted.[7] Data were collected over a period of three months from January through March of 1988. The Delphi progressed as follows:

Round 1: Twelve classes of students in the schools' experimental populations were interviewed using a group-discussion format to find out how they would describe very positive learning environments, roles and responsibilities teachers and students would have to assume to promote these, and activities that would help create good learning opportunities. We visited each class as a team in the teacher's absence. During a 35-to-45-minute period we interviewed the class as a whole, alternating responsibilities for asking questions and recording answers. The questions were designed ethnographically with "grand tour" and "probe" elements. Sessions were also recorded on audio tape to provide backup. Forty-five-minute interviews were conducted with each of the participating teachers, using the same questions with wording adjusted somewhat for adults. Group and individual interviews were analyzed by extracting each content statement made by any participant. The statements were then grouped by similarity, resulting in the identification of 21 dominant themes, each raised by 75 percent or more of the classes of students and/or individual teachers. (See Table 1)

Table 1
Primary Issues To Be Considered In Designing Positive Learning Environments

Themes Raised by Most Classes of Students

Ambience: clean, neat, desirable physical characteristics of classroom
Art: opportunities to participate in fine arts, drama, music
Cooperation: cooperation among students or between students and teacher
Disturbance: students not disturbing others, making noise, creating distractions
Explanation: teacher explains clearly, allows students to ask for help or further explanation
Fieldtrips: opportunities to learn outside the classroom
Stress: lack of tension, pressure
Work: chance to practice, study, review, try, finish, apply one's self

Themes Raised by Most Classes of Students and Most Teachers

Accomplishment: students experience a sense of accomplishment, are challenged, feel that they've tried hard and done their best
Interest: learners and teachers show enthusiasm, work is interesting
Learning Readiness: being ready, paying attention, listening, motivated, participating
Openness: open, accepting, positive, supportive, comfortable, caring emotional atmosphere
Organization: the need to organize, structure, plan for learning
Peers: orientation to peers--helping, learning or socializing with peers
Play: fun, games, play
Social Development: promotion of student social and emotional growth
Suitability: developmental appropriateness, matching learning styles to instruction, ability grouping, manipulatives, visuals
Variety: variations in teaching methods, activities, subjects

Themes Raised by Most Teachers

Attention: teacher awareness of student needs, gives individualized attention or work
Home: includes issues related to students' home life, children's backgrounds, interaction between home and school
Responsibility: student choice, decision-making, government, leadership

Rounds 2 & 3: During Rounds 2 and 3, we began by verbally reporting each major interview theme to the students. As each theme was introduced, the students were asked to guess how it had been viewed by the other classes and the teachers.

Then, because we wanted to promote further thought and discussion, we showed them pie graphs which displayed the relative importance attached to each theme by students and teachers, but did not identify whether the themes were perceived positively or negatively. After viewing the graphs, the students were asked to share their thoughts on the actual results.

Following the discussion, we read to the students a series of specific statements about classroom life. These were developed in reference to the 21 themes identified during Round 1. All Delphi statements were expressed in terminology used by the children. Some were designed to provide opportunities for participants to evaluate the quality of their current learning environments, others to collect and synthesize their perceptions of highly desirable ones. The statements were further divided into two classes. For the first group, the students were asked to indicate their level of agreement using a five position scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The scale was represented on the answer sheets in a picture format with faces displaying very unhappy through neutral and very happy expressions. For the second group of statements, the children were asked to indicate how often a particular event raised during Round 1 occurred in their classroom. They were again asked to respond to a five position scale, represented on the answer sheet in the form of empty boxes to signify that the event "almost never" occurred, and partially to completely filled boxes indicating that the event occurred with some frequency to "almost always." Teachers were given copies of the graphs, asked to consider the results, and then to respond individually to the same sets of statements given the students on response forms designed for adults.

All participants were also asked to respond to several open-ended questions at the end of each round. During Round 2, students and teachers were asked to respond to questions concerning the advantages and disadvantages associated with multi-aging or rescheduling. In Round 3, participants were asked to again consider the initial question posed in Round 1--what factors are most important in creating positive learning environments? Students were asked to draw a picture of their most important factor and to accompany their drawing with a descriptive phrase or sentence. Teachers were asked to write a brief statement.

Similar to the analysis of the interview data, responses to the open-ended questions were analyzed to identify primary content themes. The scaled responses were analyzed by calculating percentages of students and teachers selecting each response to each statement. Student responses are listed in Table 2 in descending order of consensus.[8] Because the Delphi was part of a larger evaluative study conducted to assess the results of multi-aging and rescheduling experiments, we also needed to determine whether or not student or teacher responses to scaled statements varied by organizational type. Additionally, we were interested in the effects of these different classroom experiences upon children's policy perspectives. To investigate these issues, the means for multi-aged, rescheduled, and combined classrooms were calculated and subjected to a t-test. Differences reaching the .05 confidence level were accepted as significant. All statements indicating significant differences in student opinion by organizational type are followed in Table 2 by an asterisk.

Table 2
Student Response to Delphi Statements

Statement	Percentage of Students Agreeing with Statement
A classroom is a better learning place when you learn many different things in many different ways.*	86%
Children should help decide the rules for the classroom.*	84%
The children in this classroom come with their minds ready and willing to learn.*	74%
When I have friends in the classroom, I learn more and understand better.	73%
If I had more time to study and practice at school or at home, I would learn more.	73%
It is just as important for students to get along with other learn to people as it is for them to learn school subjects.*	69%
I would learn more and understand better if this classroom was quieter and less distracting.	68%
This classroom has rules that make it easier for us to learn.*	66%
I learn more and understand better when I get to choose what I want to study.	63%
My teacher knows a lot about me and how I learn.	62%
I would learn more and understand better if the teacher reviewed lessons more often.	60%
Children learn more when there are learning centers set up in their classroom.	57%
Children find it easier to learn when the classroom is clean and neat.	52%
When my teacher and mother or father know each other and talk about my work, I do better in school.*	51%
I learn more and understand better if I can see pictures or handle objects.	50%
I would learn more and understand better if my teacher assigned more projects, experiments, and reports.	49%
In this classroom no one feels left out we respect each other and don't do or say mean things.*	48%
Children learn more and understand better when there are fewer students in the classroom.*	46%
Children learn more and understand better when the work is difficult and challenging.*	35%
It is hard for me to learn well because this classroom is too small and too crowded.*	29%

Table 2 - continued

If we played learning games less often, we would have more time for learning important things.* 26%

We would have more time to learn and could learn better if we had fewer breaks. 13%

Statement Percentage of Students Indicating Event Occurs Frequently

I listen and pay attention to the teacher.* 73%

Children learn more when they go on fieldtrips than when they stay in the classroom.* 73%

In this classroom I work hard and feel proud of my work. 73%

I learn more and understand better when the activity is fun. 66%

My teacher comes to class well prepared and well organized.* 61%

When children get rewards for their work, they learn more and understand better. 56%

My teacher has enough time to answer my questions and help me when I need it. 51%

When our teacher gives us a lesson, he/she has enough time to explain it very clearly to us. 50%

The students in this classroom cooperate with and help the teacher.* 48%

The students in this classroom cooperate with each other and work together well. 47%

In this classroom the students help each other learn.* 46%

I learn more and understand better when my teacher is real excited about the lesson. 46%

Children should try to solve their own problems in the classroom.* 44%

Children feel better about learning when the teacher tests them, and then separates them into groups so they can work with other students who learn at the same level.* 44%

The children in this classroom help each other feel good about themselves and their school work.* 44%

Writing and acting out a play helps me to learn more about what we're studying. 36%

I learn more and understand better when I work alone instead of with a group. 31%

I feel rushed and hurried in this classroom. 27%

* Statements indicating significant differences in student opinion by organizational type.

Student Designs of Positive Learning Culture

From a policy perspective, one of the best ways to organize and to communicate Delphi results is to construct a narrative description of the policy alternative or alternatives depicted in the data. The following scenario describes student perceptions of positive learning culture developed by bringing together: (a) responses to Delphi statements indicating moderate to high levels of consensus (60 percent or more) concerning perceived desirability (agree to strongly agree) or frequency of occurrence (often to almost always) among the entire student population; and (b) primary themes raised both at the beginning (Round 1 interviews) and at the end (Round 3 open-ended questions) of the study in response to questions concerning factors of greatest importance to the design of positive learning environments.

Student Scenario of Positive Learning Culture

Classroom Atmosphere: Students feel loved, cared for, comfortable, and confident. They have friends in the classroom which helps them to learn more and understand better. Teachers and students are nice, kind, respectful, and friendly to each other. Making new friends and learning to get along with others is valued as much as learning school subjects. When difficulties arise, the class talks things over which helps everyone to feel better. The room itself is a warm and inviting place--large, uncrowded, clean, neat, colorful, with interesting materials and objects on display.

Student Contributions: Students make the classroom a good learning place by cooperating with each other and their teachers. They try to be quiet and calm, to obey the rules, to share and to help each other so that they can learn. They try especially hard to cooperate in these ways if the work is difficult. Students come to the classroom ready and willing to learn. They pay attention and listen to the teacher. They study, practice, and try hard to complete their work. Students help to decide on rules for the classroom. At times they also help to decide on what they will study.

Teacher Contributions: Teachers make the classroom a good learning place by explaining things clearly, reviewing lessons often, helping students when they need it, and making sure that everyone understands before moving on. They are organized and well prepared. They are also kind, consistent, understanding, and willing to listen.

Approaches to Learning and Classroom Organization: Students learn many different things in many different ways. Learning is often playful and fun. Students are allowed to move around, and to use interesting materials and objects like math cards, globes, computers, animals, books, art supplies. They are often involved in fieldtrips, experiments, simulations, and learning games. Enough time is provided at home and at school for study and practice. Break time, when students can snack and talk or play games with their friends, is also valued as an important part of the school day.

Educational Systems Design by Children for Children: Priorities and Comparisons

The children's priorities for educational systems design are reflected in the preceding scenario. In light of their preferences, what priorities should guide educational policy development and program evaluation? How do the students' priorities compare to those identified by their teachers? In what ways do they reflect priorities revealed through prior research?

The top priority identified by students participating in this study is that of maintaining emotionally positive and supportive classroom atmospheres. Both at the beginning and at the end of the Delphi process, students indicated that this element is significantly more important than all other elements of classroom design. Their assumption that such environments are essential to the promotion of learning is shared by their teachers and documented by a significant body of prior research. In comparison to all other aspects of student perception, assessments of emotional and social atmospheres are most frequently and comprehensively investigated (Fraser, 1980; Moos, 1979; Walberg, 1976). Upon completion of a metaanalysis of such studies, Haertel et al. (1979) concluded that student perceptions of psychosocial climate consistently account for variance in learning outcomes beyond the variance accounted for by ability. Learning gains are positively associated with student-perceived cohesiveness, satisfaction, formality, goal direction, and democracy while negatively associated with friction, cliques, apathy, and disorganization.

The students also indicated that the quality of classroom atmosphere is strongly dependent upon the quality of social relationships among members of the classroom community. High quality relationships are characterized by feelings of mutual trust, acceptance, and belonging. Although it is clear that the students value open and supportive relationships with their teachers, relationships with their peers assume special significance. In response to student interest expressed in Round 1, eight of the 40 Delphi statements explore aspects of student/student interaction. Seventy-four percent of the children agreed that they learn more and understand better when they have friends in the classroom. Student priorities revealed in these results reinforce a central finding acquired through almost thirty years of student attitude research which suggests that students of all ages perceive relationships with their peers as the most important and enjoyable aspect of schooling (Coleman, 1961; Boocock, 1976; Davies, 1982; Goodlad, 1984; Lickona, 1988). The importance attributed by young people to this issue is also well supported in studies documenting positive correlations between peer interaction and academic achievement, socialization, and emotional development (Johnson et al., 1975; Johnson, 1981; Slavin & Oickle, 1981; Slavin, 1983).

The second priority dominating the students' descriptions of positive learning culture is that of cooperation. From their perspective, maintaining an emotionally positive and supportive classroom atmosphere is largely dependent upon the level of cooperative behavior displayed by students--cooperation is their primary responsibility and primary contribution to the learning process. The students' emphasis on being kind, fair, respectful, and helpful is interesting in light of an observational study of elementary classrooms recently conducted by Blumenfeld and Meece (1985). Although the teachers rarely talked to students about moral expectations or priorities, emphasizing instead classroom procedures and academic performance, the students rated moral norms as most important and attached greater affect to adherence or violation in this area.

Although the children participating in this study attributed greater importance to their role in maintaining positive classroom atmospheres, they also acknowledged ways in which teachers can be helpful. Their responses are consistent with results of prior studies, indicating that from the perspective of young students, teachers contribute by responding to students as valued individuals--displaying empathy, warmth, support, accessibility, respect--and by maintaining a safe, orderly, and somewhat predictable environment (Freese & West, 1972; Buxton & Prichard, 1973; Moos, 1979; LaBonty & Danielson, 1988). One aspect of cooperation attributed importance by the students, but not by their teachers, is the that of not disturbing classmates. In response to the statement, "Students would learn more and understand better if this classroom was quieter and less distracting," 68 percent of the students expressed some level of agreement, while 62 percent of the teachers disagreed. As both an initial and final theme, the importance of being quiet and non-disruptive is well represented in the students' responses, although seldom raised by their teachers.

Moving from social/emotional aspects of educational design to academic/instructional ones, the students' responses suggest that learning is promoted when teachers explain concepts, assignments, and expectations clearly; are sensitive to their needs for further review and elaboration; and are well prepared and well organized. The students' concerns for organization and preparation were shared by their teachers. The teachers' assessment of their own responsibilities varied from the students' in that teachers attributed greater importance to the level of enthusiasm they display and seldom identified the quality of teacher explanations as essential to promoting student learning. The students' prioritization of quality explanations is, however, reflected in recent research. During of a study of upper elementary children's attitudes toward teaching styles, Cedric Cullingford (1987) discovered that his participants were more concerned with communication of expectations and information than with the types of instructional methods adopted or with aspects of the teacher's personality. Rather than attributing learning difficulties to the complexity of the subject matter, the students pointed to lack of clear explanations. They expected teachers not only to know the subject, but also to know how to explain it and how to vary explanations for students who did not understand. Cullingford also found that explanations to the entire class provide a sense of cohesion and security for young students. Results of other studies demonstrate that although adults tend to assume reciprocity of perspectives when interacting with children, children cannot always guess, infer, or intuit what teachers intend (King 1979; Winne & Marx, 1982; Duke, 1987; Reifel, 1988). Misunderstandings, due to lack of clarity or contradictions inherent in teacher messages, or to developmental limits in children's understanding, are common (Weinstein, 1983). Such misunderstandings clearly interfere with learning.

The Delphi findings also point to priorities with respect to instructional methods. The students prefer playful, active, peer-oriented approaches to learning. Related priorities include use of life-like interactive materials, opportunities for student-directed learning, and the importance of scheduling times for relaxed, playful interaction throughout the school day. Enthusiasm for such techniques was expressed by the teachers and is well reflected in decades of educational theory and research ranging from the teachings of Dewey (1938) and Piaget (1958), to studies of primate socialization (Lancaster, 1975; Chalmers, 1980), to prior investigations of student opinion (Farley, 1975; Wang & Stiles, 1976; Davies, 1982; Cullingford, 1987). Both student and teacher responses further suggest that learning is enhanced through use of a wide variety of instructional methods. Similar to the students involved in Cullingford's study, and reflecting general findings gleaned from learning styles research (Messick, 1976; Dunn & Dunn, 1978; Witkin & Goodenough, 1981), the children acknowledged the value of utilizing multiple approaches to address varied academic interests and needs.

Student Evaluations of Current Learning Cultures

In light of the priorities identified by the children, to what extent were their needs fulfilled within their current learning environments? The results reveal both areas of satisfaction and opportunities for improvement.

First, the students were generally happy with their performance in terms of self-discipline and self-motivation (coming to class ready and willing to learn, often listening and paying attention, often working hard and feeling proud of their work--level of consensus of approximately 70 percent). However, their responses to Delphi statements concerning peer cooperation and support--an issue which they evaluated as highly important--were mixed (students often cooperate with each other and work together well, students respect each other and don't do or say mean things, students often help each other learn, students help each other to feel good about themselves and their school work--level of consensus ranging from 46 to 48 percent). Although the teachers appeared satisfied with student performance in this area (more than 70 percent reaching consensus for the preceding statements), these findings suggest that the students might benefit if assisted in improving the quality of their peer relationships.

Second, the students were generally pleased with several aspects of teacher performance (knowledge about individual students including understanding of their learning style, frequency of high quality teacher preparation and organization--level of consensus approximately 60 percent). However, their responses to statements concerning the quality and extent of teacher explanations were somewhat ambivalent. Approximately half of the students could not agree that teachers usually have enough time to explain things clearly, to answer questions, and to provide help when necessary. Additionally, 60 percent agreed that they could learn more and improve their understanding if lessons were more frequently reviewed.

Third, although the students indicated satisfaction with a number of factors related to the quality of classroom atmosphere (they did not feel rushed, hurried, crowded, or confused about rules), they did suggest that a quieter, less distracting environment would enhance their opportunities to learn.

Because student evaluations of their current learning environments varied by organizational type, their participation in the Delphi was also helpful in evaluating the relative success of the organizational innovations in which they participated. Significant differences were indicated for 18 of the 40 Delphi statements. These findings, along with data collected through systematic observations, were aggregated by similarity to reveal related behavioral and conceptual patterns.[9] Upon completion of this analysis, the three classroom types showed differential effects and frequencies for concrete, interactive learning patterns in which students learn with and from their peers; and for patterns which produced open, comfortable and caring emotional climates. Rescheduled and combined classrooms provided more opportunities for active, engaged learning, and had more success in using these methods. Multi-aged classrooms, however, were more successful in producing the emotionally positive and supportive learning atmospheres most highly valued by the entire population of students.

Listening to Children's Voices: Implications for Policy and Practice

As indicated in preceding sections, several of the children's design priorities reflect those valued by adults. Others, however, are unique to the children in that they are neither represented in teacher responses, nor are they well addressed in contemporary educational theory and research. In what ways do the children's insights challenge or encourage reconsideration of themes or assumptions which currently dominate processes of educational inquiry? In what ways might educational policy and practice be enhanced if children's perspectives were taken seriously? Although this study is exploratory in nature, the findings suggest that we could honor children's experience and perceptions by focusing increased research, design, and evaluation efforts on two primary issues.

The Quality of Student/Student Interaction: From the perspective of the child participants, a nurturant classroom atmosphere, created and sustained through academically- and emotionally-supportive peer relationships, is most essential to the development of effective and empowering learning cultures. As such, their insights reinforce humanist (Rogers, 1983; Combs, 1965) and feminist (Weiler, 1988; Schniedewind & Davidson, 1983) concerns for the social and emotional welfare and development of young people, and the emphasis of biocultural (Kimball, 1982; Dobbert & Cooke, 1987) and cooperative learning theorists (Johnson & Johnson, 1975; Slavin, 1983) on peer interaction. Their priorities challenge, however, the large volume of studies predicated on assumptions that the nature of curriculum and instructional methods and the quality of teacher/student interaction are more significant in promoting learning. Because to a large extent recent research and reform efforts are grounded in an individualistic, academically-oriented, teacher-centered model of educational process, few studies investigate the nature and implications of student/student interaction. Similarly, because adults generally perceive peer interaction in the classroom as bothersome, non-productive, or disruptive, rather than promoting and supporting the development of students' social relationships in terms of educational policy and practice we actively work to stifle them (Johnson, 1981).

Why do children view this aspect of classroom life so differently? Why do students believe that both the quantity of their learning and the quality of their understanding are enhanced when they have friends in the classroom? One possible explanation is provided by the primary-school children who participated in an ethogenic study conducted by Bronwyn Davies. Their perceptions of friendship proved to be central to Davies' attempt to discover how children interpret their experiences in the classroom and on the playground. Their responses imply that when children enter the classroom they enter a strange new world, a foreign culture constructed by adults. As explained by Davies,

> Making sense of this strange new world is a task they engage in with each other. The teachers may spell out the rules for classroom behavior, but the sense to be made of it all is something adults cannot really provide. Friends are the source of meaning and therefore a source of identity. They can, by their presence and shared meaning world, render the world a sensible and manageable place. (1982, p.70)

Along with the findings of this study, Davies' results suggest that we might enhance our designs for policy and practice by first devoting significant research efforts to exploring with children the nature of student/student interaction and the impact of peer relationships on varied aspects of the learning process. Contingent upon the results, we could then work with children to develop instructional programs and organizational arrangements[10] which provide preparation and support for students as they engage in cooperative and nurturant peer-oriented behavior.

The Nature of Students' Contributions to the Learning Process: Research designed to identify ways in which children actively work to promote learning, independent of adult direction or support, is virtually non-existent. Results of this study suggest that children's efforts to encourage their own and their peers' development are not readily apparent to adults. When classrooms are assessed from an adult perspective, some student contributions are likely to remain hidden. For example, from the students' perspective a quiet environment, relatively free from distractions, helps to promote learning. Perhaps because being quiet and non-disruptive requires significant effort on their part, children perceive such behavior as a contribution. In contrast, their teachers--in response to their own priorities and/or pressure from parents, administrators, researchers, and policy-makers--become so focused on their role in managing and controlling the classroom that the children's efforts to manage and control themselves, and perhaps their peers, are overlooked.

Adults attribute to other student contributions levels of importance incongruent with those assigned by children. For example, the students saw their role in maintaining positive social and emotional atmospheres as primary; their responsibility to be ready and willing to learn, and to sustain focus on academic activities, as secondary. From the perspective of teachers, this ranking was reversed. Additionally, although contemporary educational theorists and reformers have advocated increased student initiative and participation in creating knowledge, assuming instructional and evaluative roles, and directing classroom activities (Neill, 1960; Freire, 1972; Bunch & Pollack, 1983; Wigginton, 1985), these types of contributions are not reflected in student responses. While the students did express interest in choosing what they would like to study, their responses did not demonstrate significant interest in assuming instructional or directive responsibilities.

Why did the students' fail to acknowledge a potential to contribute to the educational process in pedagogical and administrative ways? Why did they not suggest that in addition to having much to learn, they also have much to teach? Are they incapable of imagining that students could perform such non-traditional roles, or do they believe that children are incapable of doing so? Would they prefer not to assume such responsibilities? Do children find other roles more important or more appealing? Or do their responses reflect awareness of one important aspect of the school's "hidden curriculum," an understanding that schools are essentially adult institutions, designed and operated in order to address adult needs, interests, and values (Davies, 1982)? Are invitations to assume roles traditionally assigned to adults interpreted by children as an unwillingness on behalf of adults to fulfill their rightful responsibilities, or are such invitations welcomed as avenues for empowerment? Discovering the answers to such questions is essential if we are to enhance children's sense of security, self-worth, and social value in educational settings. Movement toward educational policy and practice that is respectful of children's experience and perceptions may be promoted by efforts to collaborate with young students in developing a more sophisticated understanding of their actual and desired contributions to learning environments.

Children's Perceptions and the Foundations of Education

The results of this study demonstrate that children are capable of devoting serious thought to issues of classroom design and evaluation. In addition to reinforcing perceptions and priorities identified by those more commonly involved in policy deliberations (i.e., teachers and researchers), responses of the third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade students provided several distinctive insights into the nature of classroom process and identified key issues to be addressed in future research. And their performance is not unique. The potential of children and youth to contribute to theory-building and policy-development in education is also confirmed by the results of prior studies.

For example, based upon his review of research on student cognition, M. C. Wittrock (1987) contends that knowledge of student beliefs and attitudes is essential to our understanding of academic achievement. He notes that contrary to widespread assumptions, self-assessments of attention provided by students correlate more highly with student performance than do researcher estimates of students time-on-task (Peterson et al., 1982; Peterson et al., 1983). Other studies indicate that student explanations of their failure to achieve can provide invaluable insight concerning their special needs (Amos & Washington 1960; Albert & Beck, 1975; Klein, 1975; Fine, 1986; Farrell, et al., 1988). Daniel Duke (1987), for example, suggests that many teachers misperceive apparent student disinterest or refusal to cooperate as an indication that they don't care about their schooling. Research on student perceptions, however, shows that in reality such students care too much--in response to what they perceive as teacher or institutional insensitivity, adopting an uncaring attitude is their only recourse. Correcting such misperceptions can result in improved academic performance, self-discipline, and interpersonal relationships among "at risk" students and their teachers (DeCecco & Richards, 1974; Duke & Perry 1977). Additionally, the role of student perceptions in providing diagnostic and prescriptive information to assist teachers in individualizing instruction (Tetenbaum, 1975; Pollard, 1985), improving accuracy of student learning style determinations (Dunn et al. 1977; Marcus, 1977), and identifying more effective learning strategies (Wang & Styles, 1976) has been documented. To summarize, the results of this study, along with others preceding it, suggest that our understanding of processes of teaching and learning, and the nature of classroom life, is enhanced when informed by children's points of view.

Yet it is not likely that efforts to include children's perspectives will move from the margins toward the center of educational studies until the broader social and philosophic implications of such endeavors are more widely acknowledged and understood. Just as the focal questions and methods of research have changed in response to growing awareness of the politics of gender, class, and race in social and educational settings, so too must socially-prescribed inequities associated with age be acknowledged in the process of educational inquiry. We live in an adult-centered, age-segregated society dominated by assumptions and expectations which actively limit the conceptual power of children. By conceptual power I mean the ability to construct, validate, and disseminate knowledge--to name one's reality and then to have one's perceptions responded to in a respectful manner. In this society, children are rarely afforded such opportunities. The consequences of epistemological exclusion are well defined by feminist theorists (e.g., Thorne, 1987; Narayan, 1988). When members of a powerful group attempt to learn about members of a less powerful one, the experiences and perceptions of those under study are frequently misinterpreted--the results filtered through unacknowledged political interests, biases, and stereotypes. Because nearly all studies in child and youth development are conceptualized and conducted exclusively by adults, prevailing images of what is means to be a child, and what it means to be educated as a child, are called into question. In order to construct more accurate representations of childhood experience and more valid theories of child development and learning, children's perspectives must be integrated throughout all aspects of youth-oriented research. Rather than limiting young people's scholarly contributions to those they have traditionally provided as research subjects, foundations scholars are called upon to work creatively with children in selecting areas of inquiry, designing methods, conducting research, and interpreting, disseminating, and applying results.[11]

Moving beyond epistemological concerns, it is essential to consider the ethical implications of age-related exclusion. Children lack not only conceptual power, but also political power. In our society, opportunities to exercise social responsibility and influence are withheld until reaching an arbitrarily defined state of maturity, rather than granted on the basis of demonstrated or developing competence. Thus children--regardless of their individual talents, concerns, or aspirations--are systematically excluded from assuming active and meaningful roles in guiding the development of schools and society. Because we ignore the intelligence that children bring to social settings, and assume they are not qualified to advise on their own behalf (Goodman, 1970; Roberts, 1970; Duke, 1987; Weinstein, 1983), children are rarely afforded opportunities to shape the social structures and processes which dominate their young lives. As the role of schooling in promoting social justice continues to serve as a focal point for educational studies, foundations scholars are challenged to expand current conceptions of democracy and pluralism to include commitments to ensuring adequate representation of, and response to, children's educational concerns and interests. Again we are called upon to work creatively with children, this time to increase their voice and influence in processes of policy design and evaluation. If we are unwilling to accept age-related patterns of exclusion and discrimination, then educational systems design by children for children assumes a central, rather than peripheral, role.

Notes

1. See, for example, National Commission on Excellence in Education, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* (1983); Task Force on Education for Economic Growth, *Action for Excellence: A Comprehensive Plan To Improve Our Nation's Schools* (1983); College Board, *Academic Preparation for College: What Students Need To Know and Be Able To Do* (1983); Twentieth Century Fund Task Force on Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Policy, *Making the Grade* (1983); National Science Foundation, *Educating Americans for the 21st Century* (1983).
2. For further discussion of this issue and supporting research see "The Roles of Youth in Society: A Reconceptualization," Kurth-Schai, 1988.
3. This study was conducted with Marion Lundy Dobbert, professor of education at the University of Minnesota. I would like to thank her for the insight, skills, and pleasure gained through working with her, and for the helpful critique which she so generously provided throughout preparation of this manuscript.
4. We have adopted the term **biocultural** to refer to a theoretical perspective on learning informed by anthropological and primate studies, and articulated by Herzog (1974), Kimball (1982), and Dobbert & Cooke (1987). The "bio-" side of this theory roots human learning processes in their biological nature. Because humans are biologically dependent on social interaction, their brains are structured to best receive information through socially interactive methods in stable, community-like groups. The cultural side of this theory grounds human learning in the critical features of human community life--the behavioral regularities, economic and political patterns, belief and value systems--necessary to sustain and govern society. The theory assumes that **all** of these factors must be taken into account simultaneously if educators wish to enhance understanding of the learning process.
5. Although originally developed as a quantitative method for acquiring expert consensus regarding technical forecasts, the Delphi has recently been more broadly defined as a method for enhancing group communication regarding complex issues (Linstone & Turoff, 1975). In light of this expanded definition, several variations of the original technique have appeared, including ethnographic variations (Poolpatarachewin, 1980; El-Shall, 1982; Palkert, 1986), those designed specifically to assist in the exploration and analysis of policy issues (Turoff, 1970; Rauch, 1979), and those adapted for use with children (Kurth-Schai, 1988).

6. All names referring to participating schools are pseudonyms.
7. Systematic observations were used to collect data concerning social and behavioral systems operative within each classroom. For a description of the procedure and discussion of results see "Evaluating Innovations in Elementary Education: Toward and Enhanced Quality of Classroom Life," Kurth-Schai & Dobbert, 1990.
8. In determining the level of consensus, percentages of participants selecting "agree" and "strongly agree" and "often" and "almost always" are grouped together for convenience in reporting results. Because this paper focuses on student policy perspectives, teacher responses to scaled statements are not presented in their entirety, although findings that are of significance when compared to student responses are discussed throughout the remainder of the text.
9. For example, observational data concerning behavioral indicators of emotional atmospheres (facial expression, emotional tone of remarks) were compared with scaled responses to Delphi statements designed to measure student perceptions of emotional climate. For further discussion of analytic procedures and results of the comparative analysis of organizational innovations see Kurth-Schai & Dobbert, 1990.
10. It is interesting to note that in this study, results of the systematic observations reveal that the quality of learner outcomes for similar classroom instructional patterns depend upon classroom social structure, with stable student populations leading to generally higher and more consistent numbers of students on-task and levels of student involvement in the learning. The importance of this factor is further reinforced by results of the Delphi. The students attending the multi-age classes, who did not experience a major change in group structure during the day, reported significantly higher feelings of happiness and satisfaction than did those from the rescheduled and combined classes where the group structure was more often disrupted.
11. Farrell's study cited earlier provides an excellent example of movement in this direction. Students from the population under study were hired to act as collaborators in the research process, rather than as informants. As such, they participated in identifying research questions, collecting data from their peers, and analyzing the results.

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Points of View: Parent-Teacher Talk

Lorraine Harner is a professor and assistant dean of the School of Education, Brooklyn College, City University of New York; Helen Davis is a doctoral student at the Graduate School of Education, Harvard University. An earlier version of this article was presented as a paper at the American Educational Research Association meetings, April 1990, Boston.

By Lorraine Harner and Helen Davis

> ...if the world we give our children is different from the one we envisioned for them, then we need to discover the moments when we, weary, distracted, and conflicted, gave in, let the curtain fall back across the window, and settled for a little less light.
> --Madeleine Grumet, *Bitter Milk*

Teachers and parents commonly find themselves "worlds apart," as Sara Lawrence Lightfoot (1978) described. Hope and mistrust abound in the unspoken and complex feelings parents and teachers have towards each other. Each creates a space for children to grow and guards territorial prerogatives and boundaries zealously. But the children permeate these borders every day, willingly or not, and they are challenged silently to integrate the different ways of being and knowing which are valued in each place.

Occasionally, children have trouble with some

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aspect of their schooling, and at such times parents are likely to be asked in for (or to ask for) a special meeting with their child's teacher. At such conferences the potential is present for honest dialogue, angry accusations, denials, and polite murmurings. Open communication between the representatives of the child's two worlds is likely to highlight differences. Such was the case when we, a teacher and a parent, participated in a problem-centered conference initiated by the teacher.

Almost a year after the events, we chose to analyze that specific parent-teacher conference. In doing so, we have discovered that there were underlying issues which were either buried or only partially addressed as we struggled in a highly charged, tension-filled situation to devise a series of negotiation strategies. The two adults involved were the authors of this paper. One of us, Helen Davis, was one of the two teachers in an interage class of kindergartners and first graders; she is presently pursuing her doctorate. The other, Lorraine Harner, a professor of education, was the parent of a kindergarten child, who had come to the United States from an impoverished Asian country just before her third birthday. (We did not know each other prior to the school year, and since then we have sustained a professional relationship in connection with the preparation of this article.) The school was progressively oriented, and both teacher and parent had selected it because they felt comfortable with the values it represented.

Although many articles have been written about parent-teacher conferences, there is little or nothing in print that focuses on a problem-oriented conference that actually occurred between a parent and a classroom teacher from the point of view of each of the two participants. Most studies give teachers guidance on how to prepare for and how to conduct a conference (e.g. Manning, 1985; Dolce, 1985; Readdick and Cartwright, 1984; Bjorklund and Burger, 1987). In addition, researchers have studied simulated parent-teacher conferences and parent conferences with specialists after a child's referral for evaluation (Ledebur, 1982; Hirsch, 1982). A recent article detailed an example of miscommunication between school representatives and an Hispanic parent (Herrera and Wooden, 1988), but without giving the school personnel an opportunity to present their point of view. As the voices of parents (e.g. Smrekar, 1989) appear in the writings of educators, a discourse is created between schools and families that may alter the interplay between these two worlds and may help each to keep the curtains drawn back, so that enough light is let in to illuminate their original visions.

We have two broad concerns as we write about the conference:

> To give as clear a picture as possible of the experience of the parent and the teacher as we went through the negotiation process.
>
> To articulate the submerged issues in the conference, around which the parent and teacher negotiated.

We have selected a "Point of View" method to present the problem that occurred in the classroom and our way of dealing with it. Each of the adults will present her Point of View about the events at three distinct junctures: the first Point of View will frame and detail the events leading up to the conference; the second Point of View will frame and refer to the conference itself; the third Point of View will reflect the perspectives gained when some time had elapsed after the conference. These three Points of View will be presented in pairs with the parent's Point of View at each stage being followed by the teacher's. We had no thoughts of writing about the conference when it occurred, so we did not tape record it. However, we have tried to report our concerns and reactions as completely and authentically as our memories would allow.

A fourth Point of View to be presented will be essentially a Meta-View about the underlying issues. It was not a part of the original schema for the paper, but emerged in the process of writing. After each of the three pairs of Points of View we will identify the manifestations of the obscured and denied basic issues. The issues, as we see them, are:

1) the clash of a collective classroom communication pattern with the intimate, interpersonal mode of mother-child transactions,
2) the constricting effects of notions of professionalism,
3) the culture of curriculum packages,
4) the refusal of a child to become fully acculturated to the conventional, non-individualized system of an institution--the school.

Point of View I-- Prior to the Conference

Parent's Perspective

When my daughter's kindergarten teacher said that there had been a bit of a problem with her recently, my heart sank. As I wondered what the problem could be, I felt a knot of anxiety swell up inside me. Her teacher's manner was gentle and softspoken, not at all threatening, but that word "problem" worried me. I knew it must be of some significance if she needed to discuss it with me. The teacher suggested that I come in for a conference sometime during the next week. My first reaction was to wonder whether I could wait until the following week to find out what the problem was. But obviously the teacher thought the matter could wait a week, and this fact helped place the issue in perspective: significant but not critical.

Marina's world at school was her private existence and she shared little of it with me. This exclusion was striking since she generally told me in great detail about most of her experiences, imaginings, and feelings. On the way home from school that afternoon I asked her if she had been having a problem in school. To my surprise, she answered, "Yes, in my math group." When I pursued the matter further, asking for details about what sort of problem, she replied, "Worksheets, I don't do my worksheets." Further questioning on my part elicited the following final comment from her, "I don't want to talk about this anymore."

I felt considerable relief at the idea that her problem was simply a matter of her not doing worksheets, and I hoped she was right. After all, if the worksheets were too hard or complicated for her, I was certain that the teachers could find a way to give her some extra help. I had been a kindergarten teacher myself a good many years ago, and was currently a professor of early childhood education, so I had a good sense of the priorities and educational values appropriate for my daughter's age group. I felt that while worksheets could be useful in kindergarten, occasionally, as follow-up and as an opportunity to practice concepts learned previously, it was very possible to have a first-rate kindergarten program without any worksheets. All in all, I hoped the issue would be resolved simply and quickly in the conference.

Teacher's Perspective

The year I taught Marina, I was a relatively inexperienced teacher working with a more experienced colleague. The class was composed of both kindergartners and first graders, in equal numbers. Our school was experimenting with a math program called *Open Court*, a highly structured program which taught concepts using many hands-on materials. A worksheet, provided for use after the lesson, reinforced the math concept of that day but did not repeat the tasks. In deference to the program we divided the students into groups for the daily math lesson. I taught the younger children.

Marina, one of my students, was a cheerful and intelligent girl who enjoyed math. On the whole, she was industrious and creative and spent her time engaged in teacher-initiated activities as well as those of her own invention. She gravitated towards activities with which she was familiar and often would observe first. I had to encourage her to try new skills and persuade her she was capable of doing them. Marina's social life was of the utmost importance to her. She was warm and loving to her friends and knew when to remove herself from a situation she didn't like. They responded in kind to her, caring for and respecting her friendship. Her experience of the social dynamics and tensions on any given day affected her concentration on her school work.

In early spring Marina gave clear signs that she was not happy doing her math worksheets. At first, she just seemed to have "lost interest"--she giggled with a friend as soon as the sheets appeared, but after I got her attention she did complete them. As days passed, she procrastinated by coloring in the pictures or inventing her own logical directions. Clearly she wanted to do the work expected of her, but for a reason unknown to me, she wouldn't or couldn't do the worksheets. These worksheets were not harder or qualitatively different from the ones we had been doing all year.

At first I thought Marina didn't understand what to do. I experimented with my presentation by giving shorter, clearer instructions, and by doing an example together. As long as we discussed the problems in a group, Marina answered the questions. She lost interest when required to work individually on the sheets. I tried sitting next to her and calling her by name to get her attention. I engaged her in playful discussions about the worksheets, hoping she would then do them easily. As my focus on her increased, the situation worsened. Towards the end of two weeks, Marina would ask for my help and then refuse it, always looking unhappy.

One day we had a crisis that involved not a worksheet, but a particular, individualized task which replaced the worksheet that day. During the lesson the children had been guessing which Cuisenaire rod combined with the rod I had chosen would equal the length of an orange rod. As usual, Marina volunteered answers, and many were correct. When I asked the children to make their own combinations, Marina did not. I explained the task and showed her again, but she did not even play with a rod. Although I knew she understood the concept, I felt she should participate, and I wanted to break the cycle that had developed over the last two weeks. I was mildly disturbed by this continuing pattern of not completing required work, but what truly concerned me was her powerlessness to attempt it. I told her she knew how to do this; we had done it together and she was good at it. I thought if she could start, she would gain the confidence to continue. I told her she had to complete the combination in front of her before she could draw. By this time, most of her classmates had finished and were already drawing, I knew how important it was to her to do what her classmates were doing, and I hoped my statement would push her to pick up a rod. She said, ''Help me,'' then wouldn't accept the help I offered and couldn't tell me what kind of help she wanted. She began to cry. She made no sound, but tears poured from her eyes and her body shook silently.

Until this incident, I had participated and contributed at parent conferences, but my co-teacher took primary responsibility for most home-school communications. After school I described the situation to my co-teacher, and she suggested I confer with Marina's mother. I went to the lobby of the school to catch Ms. Harner before she left. Marina was talking with a friend, so I was able to tell Ms. Harner that there was a problem we ought to talk about. I asked if she could come in next week, we agreed on a time, and I went upstairs without discussing the matter further.

Even in the best of circumstances, many teachers feel nervous about the prospect of talking to parents about their children. Fortunately, my co-teacher and I had made a studied effort throughout the year to establish a positive rapport between us and the parents. Marina's mother liked our classroom and was verbally supportive of us. A conference with her had all the potential to alleviate or clarify the difficulty. She knew Marina most intimately, her joys, her fears, and her present and past experiences as they were interconnected.

I, on the other hand, had advantages of perception that only a teacher could have. The difficulty had arisen in school, a setting with which I was intimately familiar, and the mother was not. I was knowledgeable about five-year-old behavior and kindergarten curricula, and I had witnessed the development of Marina's problem.

As I prepared for the conference, I thought about what happened, and how I would explain it to the mother. I feared the difficulty had escalated to this degree through some fault of mine, and I also feared the mother would blame me. Marina had reacted first to the worksheets and then to my focused attention on her frozen ability. I was convinced the cause was not a lack of conceptual understanding. Much of Marina's reaction was emotional, and I had to consider her relations with her classmates, with me, and with her mother. My goal for the conference was to give and get information. We would meet to exchange our knowledge and thoughts to help Marina.

Meta-View

The teacher's recollections of the time preceding the conference are substantially more detailed than the mother's, whose knowledge of her child's progress stops at the front steps of the school. In the world of the home, the mother's knowledge has made her influential and powerful in her child's life. Yet once the child is sent to school, she has been handed over to a system from which the mother is excluded. Despite her in-depth knowledge of her child, the mother's absence from the schoolroom renders her powerless, dependent on teacher and child for information. She is the outsider, struggling to gain some sense of what happened. Through her inquiry to her child this mother tries to reclaim some of the full and intimate communication and knowledge that she lost when she introduced her child to that ''other'' world of the school and to, as Lightfoot calls her, the ''other'' woman, her child's teacher.

In contrast to the mother and child's private, one-to-one conversation after school, the teacher's conversation with the child was, as school conversations almost always are, a public one, with all the children in the kindergarten math group working on a topic in the same place at the same time. Thus we see here the first of the underlying issues: the opposition of the communication modes of home and school--intimate and interpersonal versus collective and objective.

The professionalizing of basic human relationships is another unidentified source of difficulty in the conference. For instance, two women talking about a child is an everyday, non-threatening kind of an event, regardless of whether they share joys, worries, or humorous anecdotes. But if one or both of them is a professional and speaking in a professional role, the emotional tenor of the meeting changes. Long-held views of professionalism stem from the male-dominated medical role model, in which detached objectivity, autonomy, and authority are key characteristics. These features result in the image of a professional as a somewhat remote person with traditional male-identified emphases on the cognitive and the technical (Hulsebosch, 1989).

In the interchange we are analyzing, one woman is a teacher, the other is both a mother and an educator. Each woman is caught in the web of professional expectations for herself and the other. For instance, the teacher has communicated that a ''problem'' exists which requires a conference, but she reserves any details about the nature of the difficulty until the arranged time, a procedure typical of objective distancing that characterizes professional relationships. After this initial meeting, the mother is left with anxiety and no idea what the problem is about. However, as a professional educator herself, she accepts the delay in getting information as part of the assigned roles belonging to the system. Had the threads of professionalism not delimited the actions of each woman, the mother might have found out that the matter had to do with Marina's reluctance to perform certain tasks as part of her math group, and more progress might have been made in the initial contact. Certainly, the mother's anxiety would have been reduced.

With the advent of professionalism in teaching comes the myth of an exclusive, specialized knowledge that can not be made easily accessible to the uninitiated, but which lends credence to the impression of an autonomous authority. One cannot know just what special knowledge and skills the professional may possess. It is not so clear that the professional always knows herself. In fact, this supposed array of professional knowledge often places unrealistic expectations upon the teacher and raises our hopes falsely about what she should be able to do. In other ways, it sets limits upon a teacher's responsibility to effect change in her students and gives her license to identify problems as being outside her professional area, i.e., problems that belong to the child or the family and that require referral to another set of professionals.

Point of View II--The Conference

Parent's Perspective

The conference was scheduled for after school at 3:30. I told Marina that she could stay in the afterschool program because I was meeting with her teachers to talk about her problem with the math worksheets. I said that sometimes teachers and parents need to talk about ways to help children when they are having trouble. She agreed happily with my proposals.

Both of her teachers were present at the conference. They welcomed me warmly and offered me some juice and crackers. Helen Davis began by saying that there had been a problem in Marina's math group for the past couple of weeks. She explained that at the end of the lesson and activities there was always a worksheet for the children to do. Marina had been refusing to do hers. The teachers said that they had tried every technique they could think of to get her to do her written work, but so far she just steadfastly refused. Rather than making a major issue out of it, they both agreed to talk with me and see if I could offer them any insights that might prove helpful.

I recalled that I had not seen very many math worksheets in the recent collections of school work (including art, writing, math, and messages from the teachers) that came home each Friday. I felt enormous relief that the matter was indeed so limited and specific. I asked right away if it was possible she did not understand the work. Ms. Davis said that she was absolutely certain that Marina understood the work, and that she was capable of carrying out all of the activities which demonstrated an understanding of the concepts involved.

I wondered if she might feel less certain of the steps involved in carrying out the written part of the lesson. Certainly, it was typical of Marina to refuse to try something if she was not completely sure that she could do it. I asked whether perhaps Marina did not clearly understand the directions on the paper work even though she demonstrated an understanding of the concepts when she was using concrete materials. Her teacher seemed fairly certain that the directions were clear, but thought that there might be a chance that Marina was not entirely certain of what to do. I noted that when I would give Marina elaborate instructions or ask her to do several things in a sequence, she seemed to have some difficulty processing lengthy utterances.

The teachers asked me what ideas I had about working with her on the math papers, since they felt they had tried everything short of a significant confrontation. I asked how important these papers were. Was there important math content to be learned that she would be missing out on if she did not do the worksheets? Or were the worksheets simply an introduction to the seatwork and paper work that characterize education and work in a literate and technologically-oriented society like ours? They thought that Marina's willingness to cooperate, to follow directions, and to be a successful member of a group was more important than the actual math content of the worksheets.

I told the teachers they probably had more techniques than I could think of. However, it seemed to me that it would be to Marina's benefit to do the work and experience herself as a successful member of the instructional group. I asked if they could find some extra time in the course of the day to go over the worksheets in a one-to-one relationship with Marina. Fortunately, they felt that could be managed easily. Then I suggested the following three steps: first, they tell her that everyone does the worksheets and she would need to do her work just like everyone else; second, they tell her that they thought she was a smart girl who could really do the work very well: and, third, they would find another time to go over her work with her in case she needed some extra attention and to be sure she understood what to do, but that each day before she went home she would need to finish her math worksheets. The teachers and I agreed to speak again in a week or so.

Teacher's Perspective

My colleague and I sat at the art table, the only one in the room with adult-sized chairs. I was nervous about the meeting, so my co-teacher had offered to be present. We arranged crackers on a plate and poured juice for ourselves. I held my cold hands in my lap and thought about the pending conference. The flow of our discussion would be affected by how I presented the issue. When Ms. Harner came in, she looked upset. We welcomed her by offering her a chair and some refreshments.

I began the conference by telling Ms. Harner briefly what had happened in school over the past three weeks, omitting the scene in which Marina began to cry. I explained what I had done in class to help Marina, and that with each successive day Marina had become more unhappy. I had not pushed her to complete the worksheets because I didn't know what stopped her. I had hoped she would start doing them again on her own.

Ms. Harner's first questions reflected what I think was her feeling that the worksheets had created her child's difficulty. She also doubted their educational value. I felt the worksheets had triggered the problem, but not caused it. Although I was not an enthusiastic supporter of worksheets, the way I had used these particular worksheets was not inappropriate for this particular group of children. More importantly, I wanted Marina to do the worksheets which were part of the math curriculum chosen by the school. If she was capable of completing them, as I believed she was, then she had a responsibility to do what was asked of her as a member of the class.

Ms. Harner had asked if Marina understood the math concepts, and I established that she did. I suspected that Marina had difficulty with the directions, especially if they were long. Her mother confirmed my suspicion with her own similar observations. She also explained that Marina's early history had been rocky, and she felt Marina still reflected some of the early life struggles she had endured. Both the mother and I acknowledged our awareness of Marina's reluctance to do anything she is unsure of. I was relieved to hear that my knowledge of Marina matched her mother's perceptions and that the mother's knowledge of her own daughter was accurate by my perceptions.

We did not figure out exactly what concerned Marina. Instead we moved on to think of ways to make her feel better about the math sheets. Marina's mother outlined the strategy. I was startled by the forcefulness of her suggestions and annoyed that she had taken control of the direction and tone of our discussion . I had expected only that she would contribute useful information about Marina, but that she would leave the task of developing an effective strategy to me. She proposed emphasizing to Marina that she had to do the worksheets like everyone else, and that she was capable of doing them and was good at it, and that if she needed more help, the teachers could help her during open work time. I remember being annoyed because we had discussed two of these recourses as ones I had already implemented. The third suggestion was useful because Marina might feel better working out her difficulty away from the public eyes of her peers. Although I heard a trace of rebuke, I accepted Ms. Harner's suggestions without voicing my irritation.

Meta-View

Although the teacher and parent are focused on math worksheets, a specific component of the *Open Court* math program which the school used, the deeper issue has to do with the culture of curriculum packages and the confusion of the phenomena with the artifacts of curriculum. Curriculum, according to Grumet (1988), "expresses the desire to establish a world for our children that is richer, larger, more colorful, and more accessible than the one we have known." As this desire becomes concretized, specific goals, content, procedures, and materials are designed. Specific curriculum materials are necessary artifacts of the curriculum, tools to be used when helpful. But because artifacts such as worksheets are tangible, they are often mistaken for the curriculum itself.

Real authority in curriculum resides in its capacity to generate a set of authentic interactions between children, content, and teachers. These interactions are the phenomena that let us know whether a curriculum truly enriches and enlarges the child's world. The development of specific curriculum materials has become a major commercial endeavor. Elaborately detailed materials and programs are produced and marketed as packages for entire elementary schools, grades K through 8. Such curriculum packages take on a false aura of authority because of their sheer mass of materials for multiple age levels, and their apparent endorsement by the schools which have purchased them.

In the present situation, both teacher and parent expressed doubts about the centrality of the worksheets to the major concepts of the math curriculum. Yet rather than rethink the necessity or validity of the worksheets, we both focused on helping the child to act in prescribed ways with these visible artifacts. Curriculum packages come with their own cultures. They carry certain implicit assumptions about the knowledge bases of individual teachers and about the ways children learn, which, if they are not addressed directly, result in a passive compliance with the dictates of commercially-distributed products. It is assumed, but never expressed directly, that the knowledge base in specific subject areas is so broad that no single teacher could master all the concepts and think of all the materials. It is further assumed that teachers are isolated in their classes and so cannot communicate from one grade level to the next what content should be reviewed and what taught for the first time. And it is assumed (wrongly) that each child will progress in regular incremental steps, and will incorporate material and concepts in ways that sources external to the child determine make sense. For all these reasons, the concrete manifestations of commercially-designed curriculum packages, i.e., the worksheets, take on an air of sacrosanct immutability. Both teacher and parent react as if the ritual format and accompanying artifacts were part of a complete and finalized culture, without realizing that culture itself is, as Freire notes, "created by people," and, as such, transformable by people.

The issue of professionalism can be seen here, once again, as the teacher and parent accept the consequence of an economic decision made by the school to purchase a particular math curriculum package. The teacher followed the guidelines implied by the school when it chose to invest in the program and materials. Her first-hand knowledge, that it was not working well for one child, was interpreted as a problem external to the curriculum and institutionally-determined set of procedures for following the curriculum. As other colleagues, fellow professionals, followed the standard procedures, so did she. The parent, whose experience as a kindergarten teacher and whose knowledge as a professor of early education informed her that worksheets were not at all necessary in kindergarten, acquiesced to the continued use of the worksheets and collaborated in the goal of having the child conform to the objective standards.

In an analysis of a well-respected kindergarten classroom, Apple and King (1977) concluded that much of what schools teach is taught implicitly, through the ways they organize the day, the materials used, and the terms under which the materials are made available. They suggest we interpret teachers' decisions and actions within the broad frame of social and economic values of contemporary capitalism. These deeply-held values may well generate the very problems teachers struggle with as well as the material limitations on the teachers' possible actions. Carlson (1982) observes that a major thrust of schools is the "basic bifurcation in pupil experience: that work is in one sphere and that more personal, social needs are in another nonwork sphere."

Point of View III--
Post Conference Thoughts

Parent's Perspective

That evening I told Marina what had been talked about and decided upon. She had a broad smile when I told her that Ms. Davis had said that she was a smart girl who really understood all the math work. And the idea of getting some extra help on the worksheets also seemed to please her. She talked about it again at breakfast the next morning. When we arrived at school, I brought Marina over to Helen Davis and told her in front of Marina that Marina knew that they were going to have a special talk about the math worksheets so that they could find a way to help Marina to get her school work done. When I picked Marina up after school that day, I asked her how her math group had gone....''Was it a little better?'' I asked. ''Not a little, it was a lot better,'' she replied emphatically!

A few days later Helen Davis informed me that the problem was greatly resolved, and indeed I noticed completed worksheets coming home at the end of the week. I felt delighted by the successful outcome of the conference, and I began to wonder why it had been so effective. I realized that by asking me for suggestions, Helen Davis had both empowered me and put me on the spot. As a mother, I was the one who knew my child the best and so, in a sense, was an expert about her. But as any parent knows, children have motivations of their own and are not always compliant.

When I was asked for insights, I shared some of my knowledge about circumstances in which my daughter was reluctant to try new things. To help them empathize with some of her hesitation, I told them some details of the extreme circumstances she endured in the first two years of her life. And I was also an advocate for my child, by asking for extra individual attention and by saying that my experience was that my daughter was eager to succeed at all new tasks, big or small, even though she was apprehensive about possible difficulties she might encounter. At the same time, I managed to support the teacher's goals for my daughter.

As I reflect back on the conference now, many months later, I have a greater appreciation of the complexity of our negotiations, thanks to Helen Davis' honest and sensitive reporting of her reactions. It had not occurred to me at the time of the conference that Ms. Davis was at all anxious about the conference. She seemed completely calm and collected. She was quite right in her judgment that I was upset. I was very worried. I had gone through quite a search to find an independent, progressively-oriented school where I felt my child would be successful. For her to be in trouble in kindergarten was disturbing to me. When I learned that it was an academic problem, I was even more distressed. When I realized it had to do with worksheets, I was both frustrated and angry. However, when I understood that the worksheets were designed as a follow-up to a lesson and were only used when the lesson was understood, their use seemed to me a bit more reasonable. But more importantly, since all the other children in her math group were doing them, I was reluctant to have her appear different. In fact, she was already keenly aware of the contrast between her Asian features and the Caucasian ones of her friends and family. I did not want there to be another layer of differences.

I suspect that my suggestions were so ''forceful'' as Ms. Davis noted because: 1) I did not want my child to be in this difficult situation for another moment, 2)

I was annoyed about the use of worksheets, 3) I wanted the teacher to take care of this, since she was physically present on a daily basis and I was not, and 4) I was worried that somehow this problem was occurring because I had not been a good enough mother. As a professional in the field of education, I realized the importance of parents and teachers working together to create the best learning situation for children, but as the parent of a child with a problem, I was beset with intense feelings.

Despite the underlying tension at the conference, we were able to focus on my child, to talk through the details of the situation, and come up with an approach that made things better for Marina. Perhaps the mutual respect we had for each other sustained us through the awkwardness of the conference. Having observed the teachers and the functioning of the class through the fall, winter, and early spring, I was very impressed with the curriculum and the talents of the teachers. Their room was rich and challenging, more so than I recalled my kindergarten room having been when I was a teacher some years ago. Another feature of the conference that helped it to work, from my perspective, was that the teachers seemed to have both respect and affection for my daughter. I felt they were concerned with making things go right for her. They definitely seemed to be "on her side." Finally, although questions of responsibility and blame were floating about throughout the conference, they were never articulated, and no blame was assigned to anyone. Nonetheless, for me, this conference required substantial marshaling of my personal resources, both in terms of energy and self control.

Teacher's Perspective

Reflecting on the conference, I am amazed at the complexity of emotions both of us faced as we worked through the problem looking for a solution. I was surprised to hear I appeared calm during the conference because I felt anything but calm. I was concerned about my responsibility in the development of Marina's difficulty and also about dealing with the parent.

I wondered if Marina's difficulty had appeared or escalated through some fault of mine, some insensitivity to her needs, or through an unreasonable demand. Marina was struggling despite my efforts to interpret and meet the emotional and cognitive needs of the children in my class. What particularly baffled me was that I knew Marina was capable of the cognitive aspect of the work. I assumed, therefore, that her difficulty was strictly emotional.

I was concerned that Marina's mother would blame me and somehow think I was not a good teacher. I had tried a variety of different approaches to solving the problem, calling upon all my resources as a teacher and someone Marina trusted, and still I had no solution. This was not a problem that could be blamed on me, yet that was how I felt. In addition, part of me resented the necessary intrusion of parent into school life. I did not like the feeling that I had to explain or justify my actions to a parent. I anticipated difficulties in dealing with the parent who might somehow hinder my efforts to resolve the issue at hand. I felt this despite what I knew about Ms. Harner; she had always shown herself to be a perceptive woman, capable and relaxed, particularly where her daughter was concerned. She was knowledgeable about children and education, and she was verbally appreciative of our classroom and of my teaching.

In this particular case I had called for a conference because I felt powerless to understand the situation in my math class. This is important to note because many problem-centered parent-teacher conferences are called for in the hopes that a discussion of the problem will illuminate a solution rather than because the teacher has a solution in mind which she wants to share with the parent. In my case, had I been able to resolve the issue without the parent, I would have done so, and perhaps Ms Harner would never have known that her child had had a period of difficulty in math.

Although the conference was arranged with the purpose of sharing information, I had tacitly assumed, as in most parent-teacher conferences, that I as the teacher would guide the conversation and that the teacher is the ultimate authority in matters concerning school. I realize I had expected this to be true when the balance of power shifted to Marina's mother as she outlined what she thought should be done, and I became annoyed at her "interference." I had felt I was asking for help, but I had in no way intended to defer to Ms. Harner or to disempower myself. I was particularly annoyed since I had already implemented two of her three suggestions.

The central reason for the conference was to alleviate Marina's painful struggle with the worksheets. Originally, I thought we would have to figure out why she was having this difficulty before we could help her, but even though we never did understand the reasons, the conference was successful in its goal. After the conference, Marina had no trouble completing the worksheets during regular math time. The problem had evaporated. My post-conference strategy differed only in that Marina knew we would help her finish her work at another time during the day, an option she never exercised.

I think this conference was successful because, although we each had personal concerns as teacher and as parent, we both had a genuine concern for the child and a firmly-established respect for each other. As for Marina, I think the knowledge of academic emotional support coming from the united front of her teacher and her mother gave her a sense of security and enabled her to do the worksheets. At the time, it hadn't occurred to me that one part of the solution lay in how the people surrounding Marina felt, people like her mother and me, not just in how Marina herself felt.

Meta-View

The conference and this paper occurred because a child refused repeatedly, and suffered in her refusal, to become fully acculturated to the conventions of an institution. Her refusal to acquiesce to curricular demands can be understood as more than a negative, anticonformist act. It can be thought of as a self-sustaining and self-creating choice, for although she said "No" to one dimension of her educational experience, her action affirmed her own subjective world. Yet the adults involved, mother and teachers, devoted all of their energies to getting her to perform in a conforming way in the world of the school.

In a mirror-image of Marina's story, Jane Aden (1987) describes the struggle of a "difficult" child, David, at a multifamily picnic where his deep convictions about appropriateness set him at odds with another child and the adults. He vehemently insisted that another boy eat his hamburger in a conventional round bun rather than the elongated hot-dog-type roll chosen by the other boy. In that family setting, David stood for objectivity--a match of appropriate shapes--but the adults supported subjectivity through the other child's right to be "creative" in his choice of a non-traditional mix of hamburger with hot-dog roll. In contrast to David, Marina's experience of being at odds with the adults occurred in school, where her behavior was compared with her peers. She tried to opt out of the normative classroom behavior expected by her reasonable, objective teacher. Marina stood for subjectivity, not the collective good or objective standards.

Although Marina's behavior changed, no one really understood the issues from her perspective. Aden focuses on "the tension between the child's point of view and the adult's," and explains that, "...if we define the child as other than he or she actually is, if we try to love the child as that other, then we indulge in the odious sort of comparison that deprives a child of the right to be himself or herself." Becoming a part of a group that functions within an institution does involve relinquishing some subjectivity and accepting a centeredness outside of oneself for certain specific purposes. Expectations set by teachers, curriculum packages, and schools gain power as their "appropriateness" is confirmed by the absence of rebellion or refusal. But as the world of her school intersected with the world of her home, no one, neither teacher nor parent, supported Marina's right to be subjective. Should her meaning have been taken more seriously as a valid personal statement, e.g., "No, this is not right for me now."? Or perhaps as a valid general statement of the "unnecessariness" or "inappropriateness" for other kindergartners in the group besides Marina?

Summary and Conclusions

Even though parents and teachers may be "Worlds Apart," as Lightfoot so tellingly observed, their constructive collaboration creates the greatest likelihood of school success for the children involved. Each of us, parent and teacher, brought to the conference a different perspective, which when put together resulted in a striking change in the child's school behavior. This shift in her level of successful functioning was noticed and appreciated by all three of those directly concerned --the teacher, the child, and the parent. Indeed, we wonder whether the positive outcome might not have been due, in large part, to the triangular network we established in relation to Marina's struggle with the school task. We adults managed to let her know that both her family and her school were united in caring about her, in believing in her capacities, and in being willing to give her something extra when required. She, in turn, apparently felt supported and strengthened in her desire to succeed, rather than criticized or threatened for unsatisfactory performance. Thus, changes in procedures and communications led to a more conventionally-productive and satisfied child.

The underlying issue of the differing communication modes used by the teacher and parent was fairly easily negotiated through the conference. Not only was a more closely-connected interpersonal communication mode established with the teacher, mother, and child talking about the problem and trying to find ways to deal with it, but, in addition, the teacher agreed to adopt a more intimate way of working with the child if she needed it to get the work done. She then offered that possibility to the child in a private way. Given the group-oriented scheduling within classrooms, that was a very significant offer and could have meant a substantial amount of time each day. (Though once the offer was made to Marina, it never needed to be carried out.) The mother, in turn, helped to create an overlap of the different communication modes typical of each world by identifying strategies which supported her child's successful performance and the teacher's objective curricular goals.

Our communication was very carefully conducted and as open as we dared, given the intense, uncomfortable emotions that swirled about and within each of us, parent and teacher. Both of us had strong feelings of apprehension before the meeting and other powerful feelings at various points in the dialogue. Teacher and parent felt vulnerable. We each wondered, more or less consciously, whether our personal and professional shortcomings might have been significant contributing factors in the development of the problem. The teacher, as the initiator, revealed enough of the child's struggle to engage the mother's concern, but not so much as to create additional anxiety. The parent, who consciously worked hard to be positive for her child's sake, struggled with feelings of anger and frustration.

Although Marina's school functioning changed markedly, for we two women there were no enduring basic shifts in the divergent orientations we brought to the conference, or in our beliefs about curriculum. The teacher had, as Lightfoot noted, a more general concern with the successful functioning of the group instructional process. The parent's orientation was more particularistic, and for her the needs of her own child greatly outweighed the significance of the curriculum and the group process. Despite our differences, we found ways to affirm positive relationships. Our efforts to construct a somewhat open exchange of opinions and information required us to take risks. The teacher had to temporarily relinquish her position of complete power and control over the intersection of children and curriculum, and accept the possibility of criticism of her professional knowledge and performance. The parent had to open up certain aspects of her family's private life, particularly her child's early history, and take the chance that her child would be labeled. She also had to question certain curriculum decisions, invoking the possibility of a negative reaction from the teacher. Yet, even after writing about this conference, we still have differences of opinion and orientation.

In our conference we did not collaborate in challenging the underlying issue of the culture of curriculum packages, even though both of us saw the worksheets as a commercial product in no way necessary to successful learning of the basic math concepts. Perhaps we did not jointly critique these curricular demands because, as Apple and King (1977) noted, a part of what schools teach is determined by the economic and social structures of a highly-industrialized capitalistic system. We tacitly and non-analytically accepted, at that time, that having a favorable disposition towards being a member of a group, doing work defined by others, at a time determined by others, whether or not an individual subjectively feels like it, is appropriate content for schools to teach. In resolving the "problem," we collaborated with the "taken-for-granted conception of schoolwork as something that called for repression more than expression on the part of children" (Carlson, 1982).

Our notions of professionalism need to be transformed from the traditional male-oriented medical model into a model that values predominantly female-identified qualities as well (Hulsebosch, 1989). It seems clear that any effort to identify central attributes of a good teacher must incorporate both objective, cognitive concerns as well as nurturing, intimate approaches. In our conference, both of us, teacher and parent, shuttled back and forth from caring concern with the feelings and needs of one child to the demands of an objective, cognitive curriculum. When the conference was over, we, in our overlapping roles as professional educators, women, and mother, felt relief that Marina was no longer in trouble, and even pleasure that she seemed to have been successfully acculturated rather than remaining an outwardly-resistant or deviant student. However, much later, in the process of writing about the events, there is a residue of sadness and regret for her loss of subjectivity and a sense that her resistance to the domination of the curriculum came from a place of truth.

Parent-teacher conferences are one forum where boundaries and borders of the child's two worlds can be negotiated. If our goal is really to enlarge our children's worlds and to let enough light in so that they may see possibilities emerge from the shadows, then teachers and parents must find ways to create networks of shared meanings and experiences. It seems inevitable that not all children's individual needs and styles will work out smoothly without some special consideration and effort to provide extra family-school support. The more that is known about actual conferences and the more open we can be about them, the greater is our chance of identifying successful negotiation strategies.

Although the end result of our conference was a child who was more satisfied and more productive, in conventional curricular ways, we are left wondering why Marina would not do the math work sheets in the first place. Our conjectures about intimate versus objective communication modes, the professionalization of basic human relationships, the culture of curriculum packages, subjectivity and resistance to school acculturation, represent our desire to understand. We have defined issues, presented points of view, but the mystery of why she repeatedly refused lingers still.

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Pedagogy, Community Organizing, and American Neopopulism

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Introduction

If community-based education (CBE) is to be considered seriously as a transformative and emancipatory political project that introduces the urban poor into a new way of living, it must reconceptualize its role within a critical theory of education. First, it must be linked to other social struggles involved in the concrete details of everyday life. One way to begin to do this is by rethinking CBE around the practice of community organizing. Much of the literature on community organizing has been defined in relation to community development.[1] A central imperative of community development is that citizens participate in defining neighborhood problems, needs, and solutions.

Second, community development must be educa-

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tive, because to participate effectively in defining neighborhood problems, needs, and solutions, the urban poor must learn to govern and serve as citizens. When community organizing is defined in this way, questions about how its educational processes structure and order the meaning of citizen participation become politically important. Community-based organizations (CBOs) also need to be defined as institutional sites involved in teaching and learning of democratic citizenship. Citing Chicago public school reform initiatives as a prime example, Elio DeArrudah agrees that CBOs play a central role in forging their constituency in relation to a concept of democratic citizenship. He writes:

> Community-based organizations are ideally situated to build community-wide participation in the schools by helping parents to improve their skills and civic awareness and by developing leadership--not only to help their children at home but to be their strong advocates and, every two years, to vote and run for local school council. (1989:11)

Third, institutions involved in the formation of political citizens are involved in producing specific types of knowledge. Community organizing contributes to this function by regulating and legitimating knowledge and power relations that can either inhibit or promote the development of democratic social relationships. Particular social interests underlie the practice of community organizing; these interests seek to work and rework the ideological terrain of democracy in order to create consent with respect to particular notions of "the people" and "the popular." (American neopopulism is an example). Insofar as community organizing accomplishes this goal, it can be conceptualized as a pedagogical practice and therefore as a form of cultural politics. Thus, community organizing also may be conceived of as an arena of controversy in which pedagogies, policies, and power play important, although contradictory, roles.

If the pedagogical process of community organizing is indeed a site of political struggle and controversy regarding the formation of political citizens, I contend that herein lie its possibilities for transforming CBOs institutionally. In this essay, I argue that community-based organizations, like schools, hold promise for transforming knowledge and power relations in ways that may help to restructure their institutional purpose towards an antiracist, antisexist, and anticapitalist vision of society. In addition, I suggest that the pedagogy of community organizing, as influenced by American neopopulism,[2] must be reconsidered critically in order to construct emancipatory forms of collective action. That is, it must be reconsidered with respect to its failure to create forms of collective action involving "the people" and "the popular" that are congruent with the formation of a radical and pluralistic democratic project. Finally, I argue that if this goal is to be realized, community organizing must be reconsidered in light of recent developments in critical pedagogy.

As a way of developing my argument, I will examine some aspects of

American neopopulism. The principal concern is that the ethic of care, which neopopulism argues is the basis for building solidarity, creates a pedagogy of community organizing that is counter to a radical and pluralistic democratic politics. More specifically, I argue that neopopulism's ethic of care structures community organizing pedagogically in ways that favor the teaching and learning of individual rights over collective or democratic rights. As a result, the pedagogical practices that underlie the community organizing practices of neopopulism are inconsistent with notions of "the people" and "the popular" as antiracist, antisexist, and anticapitalist.

Defining neopopulism as redistributive populism, Kennedy et al. argue that this "narrow version of populism...suppresses nonclass differences such as that of race, seeks to unite 'the people' around a least-common denominator program based on traditional ideology, and holds out redistribution of resources as the central goal." (1990:302). With this comment in mind, I believe that it is appropriate to situate my discussion of the relationship between pedagogy and community organizing within a critique of American neopopulism, especially when we also consider its many local and national organization training centers throughout the United States. To critique neopopulism in this way is not a rejection of that position, but rather an affirmation that it, too, is an product of political and ideological struggle.

In order to critique neopopulism and to develop my argument that community organizations and community organizing are involved in the cultural production of political citizens, I will rely on the work of post-structuralist theorists, especially that of Chantel Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau. In doing so, I will analyze the relationship between the production of knowledge/power and the formation of radical democracy. In addition, to advance the notion that community organizing is a pedagogical practice and therefore represents a form of cultural politics, I will draw upon the works of Henry Giroux and Peter McLaren, although their work focuses principally on schooling. Giroux's work regarding the intersection between popular culture, everyday experience, and critical pedagogy in the formation of what he terms a critical democracy is pertinent to developing a critical pedagogy for community organizing, as is McLaren's work on post-colonialism and the social construction of the body.

Furthermore, although this paper deals with many of the contemporary theoretical debates surrounding community-based education, the context for discussing these debates has been informed largely by my own recent participation as a case-worker and as a coordinator of a community-based education program in a predominantly Puerto Rican and African American neighborhood (Westtown/Humboldt Park) in Chicago. During my involvement as an African American community organizer, I ascertained a need among numerous organizers working in community-based education to theorize not only the changes and issues that faced them but also to develop more insight into the pedagogical implications of programs and community organizing in general. Therefore, in the context of my own work, I would like to reiterate that critical pedagogy in part has provided a basis for understanding theoretically the relationship between pedagogy and the production of knowledge/power, particularly for community organizing in North American cities.

Finally, in order to show the implications of this relationship for the way in which community organizing structures and orders collective action, I will organize this discussion around four topics: CBOs as free spaces or public spheres; knowledge/power and CBOs; neopopulism, the ethic of care and community organizing; and a critical pedagogy for community organizing and its possibilities for collective action.

CBOs as Free Spaces or Public Spheres

Some progressive neopopulist writers (Boyte, Booth & Max 1986; Boyte & Riessman, 1986; and Evans & Boyte, 1983) refer problematically to community-based organizations as "free" social spaces. They argue that within the realm of everyday experiences, free spaces are crucial for creating a radical democratic culture and social movement. This is the case because free spaces are rooted in communal values and relations and provide the basis for active citizenship. In addition, free spaces are supposedly "unstructured by the imperatives of large and bureaucratic organizations" (Evans and Boyte 1986:188). As neopopulist Harry Boyte comments, "Voluntary associations [CBOs] are free spaces, relatively open, flexible and controlled by a group themselves, they...furnish critical experiences in democratic sociability and become the foundation for broad, social movements" (1986:309).

Before explaining my partial disagreement with their category of free spaces, I must give credit to American neopopulists for their articulation of free spaces as the context in which people's experiences produce meanings, values, and consciousness that speak to the formation of a democratic culture necessary for a radical politics. British labor historian E. P. Thompson, in his writing on questions of cultural formation, has given neopopulists such as Evans and Boyte insight into the relationship between people's experiences and the production of democratic culture. Thompson, like the neopopulists, defines culture as the meanings and the values that arise among distinctive social groups and classes in given historical conditions and relationships. In defining culture, Thompson brings together the categories of consciousness and social conditions in relation to the concept of experience: "How people experience their conditions of life, define them and respond to them is culture" (Bennett 1981:26).

Neopopulists use this definition of culture to explain that CBOs embody people's experiences and therefore the traditions and practices of community life. With this definition of culture, neopopulists create notions of "the people" and "the popular." Moreover, these notions, which are grounded in everyday experiences and therefore in the cultures of "the people," provide the raw materials with which to define democracy. Although neopopulists link particular forms of knowledge about democracy to everyday experience, they have virtually no way of explaining how people learn to interpret and invest emotionally in the ideological meanings that organize their experiences. This omission is important, because how we interpret our experiences, both rationally and affectively, within the limitations and the possibilities of everyday institutions, has serious implications for the construction of "the popular" and therefore for the basis for defining democracy.

Saul Alinsky, a legendary populist strategist, has influenced neopopulists' conceptions regarding the relationship between neighborhood culture and the formation of CBOs. In *The Backyard Revolution* (1980), Boyte quotes the president of the Midwest Academy, a national community organization training center, as reporting that "Alinksy is to community organization as Freud is to psychoanalysis" (1980:39). According to Boyte, "[Central] to Alinsky's method was the understanding of culture as a resource to be used, not discarded, and the perception that a successful organization must build upon the existing elements of the social fabric, not destroy them" (Boyte 1979:13).

Alinsky and Boyte, as well as most neopopulist writers, overlook pedagogical considerations concerning how people learn to produce and invest both rationally and affectively in particular ideological meanings regarding their everyday experiences. More specifically, insofar as neopopulism is rooted in the Alinsky tradition, it is oriented toward a narrow pragmatism that defines and stresses the importance of community organizing as a non-ideological practice. In agreement with this observation, Robert Fisher notes that with regard to political education, neopopulism limits its focus to building organizational skills--to how organizers can get people to join and build a neighborhood program. Fisher argues that the reason for this limitation is that neopopulist pragmatism encourages concrete results such as winning victories, because this approach guarantees that the organization will survive. He concludes that "given the deemphasis on political education and ideology, it is not always clear whose traditions, whose hopes and dreams, whose community the new populism supports. Whose traditions are supported, for example, when new populist organizations refuse to take a stand on busing for school integration or on abortion?" (1984:141).

Therefore, by defining community organizing as a non-ideological practice, neopopulism makes problematic the transformation of CBOs into radical democratic social movements. The description of community organizing as a non-ideological practice creates a pedagogy that is unable to interrogate critically forms of rationality, needs, and desires as they are constituted in relation to everyday experience. As a result, community organizing is implicated in the cultural reproduction of neighborhood traditions that are unable to contest racism, patriarchy, parochialism, and authoritarian social relations. Mike Davis, for example, disagrees with Boyte that the national grass-roots insurgency of the 1970s created the mass foundation for a "new democratic movement." Davis argues that the dominant trend of grass-roots political action bears hard to the right. He comments:

> the largest popular movement which reclaims the right of neighborhood self-government against bureaucratic usurpation is the anti-busing movement. The local citizen action model which he [Boyte] believes is regenerating progressive politics is also the organizational paradigm for thousands of conservative property-owner groups in the suburbs who are fighting to preserve regressive tax systems. These groups sometimes directly interface with what Boyte has previously described as the "New Populism." For instance, some of the Catholic community groups which he praises--and which have definitely "progressive" stances on certain questions--also provide a mass base for the antifeminist, "right-to-life" backlash. (1978:55)

In conjunction with this move to the right, community organizing also marginalizes or excludes racial minorities and the poor, women, and gays and lesbians from participating in (or with) some CBOs in forging a popular definition of democracy. The memories of human suffering and the forms of knowledge and struggles in which suffering was given shape and contested by subordinate groups are marginalized further or even excluded totally from any popular definition of democracy. This is the case because the memories of subordinate groups provide a reference from which to critique and therefore to show the partiality of master narratives, which attempt to create solidarity by concealing the intended interests and desires of dominant groups. Elaborating on this point, Giroux explains, "Dangerous memory has two dimensions: that of hope and that of suffering....it recounts the history of the marginal, the vanquished, and the oppressed, and in doing so posits the need for a new kind of subjectivity and community in which the conditions that create such suffering can be eliminated" (Giroux 1988:99). In this process, dangerous memories delegitimate the authority of dominant groups, and hence their vision of the role that CBOs should play in relation to neighborhoods and cities.

Insofar as CBOs regulate the dangerous memories of marginalized groups, the category of free social space belies its theoretical and political limitations. Therefore, the primary problem of the American neopopulists' reading of CBOs is that they, too, assume automatically that they are free social spaces. Neopopulists like Boyte and Evans take for granted that the cultural field of CBOs is a monodic site of harmony and control rather than a site of disjuncture, rupture, and contradiction (McLaren 1990:3). Furthermore, they begin with the mistaken assumption that CBOs are free social spaces rather than the result of community organizing practices that construct or reconstruct knowledge and power with respect to particular social interests and desires. Free social spaces are at once anchored in and are the outcome of social practices that configure everyday experiences, desires, needs, and interests around particular definitions of the good life.

Democratic Antagonisms

Henri Lefebvre pointed out that the everyday has become a social practice because "the extension of capitalism goes all the way to the slightest details of ordinary life" (1988:79). He makes this observation because of the relationship between multinational corporations and the economy in producing consumer goods for everyday life. At this point, social needs and the everyday have been programmed by advertising and the media, and are managed and administered by the huge investments of these corporations. Linked with the interests of capital, the Keynesian welfare state has resulted in the further commodification and bureaucratization of social needs and the everyday through the provision of services like housing, health, education, and transportation. Therefore, it has become controlled and manipulated, an object of social organization.

The everyday, however, also has become a site of resistance to multiple forms of oppression. Mouffe (1988) refers to this resistance as **democratic antagonism**. If the everyday is to become a site of democratic antagonism, however, the forms of subordination and inequality that constitute the everyday must be articulated institutionally within democratic discourses. This statement does not mean that democratic antagonisms necessarily lead to democratic struggles or to the democratization of social life (Mouffe 1983, 1988). Rather, Mouffe is suggesting that the democratic antagonisms which have emerged because of the commodification of social needs, the intervention of the state, and the homogenization of culture are defined or articulated around democratic discourses. This articulation can be **either to the political left or to the political right**.

To cite an example, the poor living conditions of many public-housing residents have been a source of democratic antagonism. With the appointment of Jack Kemp as head of the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), these antagonisms have been articulated into the New Right discourse, which defines democracy in ways that subordinate the pursuit of equality and political participation to individual liberty and the defense of private property. This discourse has served to legitimate the conversion of public housing into resident-owned-and-managed facilities, where residents are thrown onto the market to acquire on their own the resources necessary for maintaining their facilities. In this way, poor public housing conditions become depoliticized and are redefined as a problem of managerial "know-how." Moreover, the high rates of crime and the fear of being the victim of a crime have mobilized residents' needs and desires in ways that cause them to invest emotionally in the entrepreneurial discourse of the New Right. This particular mobilization of affect also has been mediated by a conservative moral discourse that interprets the problem of crime as moral decay. Social deterioration caused by crime is blamed on the welfare state. In this context, poor public housing conditions are defined not only as managerial problems, but also as the result of moral decay in the community. This situation, conservatives argue, is due to the lack of an entrepreneurial work ethic, caused by the contaminating incursion of the welfare state into everyday life.

Meanwhile, in an effort to resolve poor housing conditions and to protect themselves and their property against crime, residents are compelled to invest in the moral and ethical standards of the New Right. Their investment, however, is not solely the result of concrete day-to-day experiences. Rather, it is, in part, the consequence of the contradictory way in which their everyday experiences become tied to conservative discourses, which is inscribed in the cultural forms of the urban poor. It is in this context that residents (not unproblematically, to be sure) give meaning to their everyday experiences. They do so in ways that encourage them to overcome their oppressive housing conditions, and to protect themselves and their property against crime by policing the morality of other residents and demanding the eviction of those who cannot follow the rules. The articulation of democratic antagonisms within public housing, however, occurs in part through the pedagogical practices of community organizing. This process takes place within institutional sites (CBOs), or what I will term public spheres, of which public housing projects are only but one example.

CBOs as Public Spheres

The category ''free social space'' misrepresents CBOs as open and flexible, and suggests that democratic discourses are constituted willfully or voluntarily into democratic struggles. Neopopulism therefore mystifies the role of dominant interests and privilege in the cultural production of ''the people'' and ''the popular'' in relation to defining democracy. The neopopulists' category of ''free space'' corresponds in many ways to some of the assumptions guiding the liberal understanding of how the public sphere should function. Giroux summarizes this thinking when he writes:

> The classic public sphere ultimately buttressed and mystified bourgeois social relations and the power of the state. Infusing the public sphere with a false egalitarianism, its bourgeois supporters denied the underlying structure of privilege and ultimately dissociated politics from knowledge by arguing that the public sphere was a place where men and women could voice their ideas regardless of social class. ...reason and rationality rather than power and domination became the ideology used both to

> hide and confirm the system of inequality that gave the classic sphere its legitimacy and rationale for existence. (1988:207)

One major difference between the classic conception of the public sphere and the category of "free space" is that in the latter case, the ideology which conceals power and domination is not only reason and rationality, but also the ideology of caring. (I will return to this point later.) The category of public sphere suggests that the articulation of democratic antagonisms into democratic struggles is negotiated and renegotiated within unequal relations of power. Because power and domination are constitutive of the cultural and political practices of public spheres, they may be seen as grounded in the conflictual process of defining and redefining democratic discourses. As Giroux explains, power "signifies a level of conflict and struggle that plays itself out around the exchange of discourse and the lived experiences that such discourse produces, mediates, and legitimates" (1988:115-116). Thus, the category of the public sphere suggests **forms of political and cultural practices that organize human experiences so as to enable individuals to interpret social reality in ways that are either emancipatory or complicitous in their own oppression, or both**. For this reason, a radical notion of community organizing must take into account the limitations and the possibilities of the existing institutional arrangement, both inside and outside CBOs, **so that the oppressed can reclaim the ideological and material conditions for organizing their own experiences**. Such a recognition can help community organizers to help the oppressed, themselves, transform CBOs into democratic public spheres, where they can learn and teach others to govern and to serve as critical citizens.

Viewed in this way, community organizing may be regarded as a cultural and political practice involved in the organizing and institutionalization of everyday experiences which in turn involve both dominative and emancipatory forms of knowledge and power relations. This perspective suggests that community organizing functions as a discursive practice. The conception of community organizing as a discursive practice is followed by the notion that it is also a pedagogical practice. In the social and discursive practices of community organizing, particular forms of knowledge and power relations are produced and regulated through specific ways of teaching and learning. These always exist in a state of dialectical tension with respect to the formation of political citizens (i.e., those who learn to govern and serve). Therefore, to speak of community organizing as a pedagogical practice anchored in institutions (i.e., CBOs) is to anticipate questions about knowledge and power. For example, how does community organizing inscribe power relations in the forms of knowledge it produces and confirms regarding particular notions of democracy? To address such questions adequately, we must examine the close connection between everyday institutions, such as CBOs, and large-scale institutions.

Knowledge/Power and CBOs

Neopopulists assume that insofar as citizen participation, community development, and community action consist of decentralized forms of power, they are free of privilege and domination. As one neopopulist puts it: ''Power should not reside in distant, obscure places.... The nation should instead embark upon an alternative approach: breaking up concentrated wealth, decentralizing wealth, dispersing ownership and grounding it in community life'' (Boyte 1984:215).

This comment reflects an acute lack of awareness as to how decentralized forms of social organization can be constituted in particular knowledge and power relations that reproduce the status quo. As Marjorie Mayo argues, in her essay ''Community Development: A Radical Alternative'' (1975), ''official antidotes'' of citizen participation, community development, and community action have served as the real sources of power and decision-making for dominant interests linked to state power. In *Let the People Decide: Neighborhood Organizing in America* (1984), Fisher explains that the ideology of participatory democracy can be manipulated by middle-class business leaders and ward politicians to favor both property ties to local real estate interests and current banking interests. In other words, the multiclass call by neighborhood-based organizations for ''neighborhood power'' loosely masks alliances between the working-class and middle-class leaders who profit financially and politically by preserving the segregated status quo (Fisher 1984:141). Nevertheless, Mayo maintains correctly that these ''official antidotes'' of citizen participation, community development, and community action ''do contain in part, if in idealized form, the outlines of potential counter-institutions'' (Mayo 1975:137-138).

Fisher and Mayo say implicitly that in contemporary society, the power of state bureaucracies and capitalist corporations rests upon complex, molecular networks of everyday relations (Melucci 1990). That is, power does not reside solely in the state or the economy, but is like a web, reaching the outermost points of the social body in the everyday practices of institutions such as churches, schools, political parties, families, and community organizations. Power is everywhere; therefore it is not possessed, but is exercised. In *Discipline and Punishment*, Michel Foucault helps us to understand power in this way:

> [Power]...is not the ''privilege,'' acquired or preserved, of the dominant class, but the overall effect of its strategic positions--an effect that is manifested and sometimes extended by the position of those who are dominated...this is not exercised simply as an obligation or a prohibition on those who ''do not have it''; it invests them, is transmitted by them and through them; it exerts pressure upon them, just as they themselves, in their struggle against it, resist the grip it has on them. This means that these relations go right down into the depths of society, that

> they are not localized in the relations between state and its citizens or on the frontier between classes. (1979:27)

Insofar as power is exercised, it is a strategy with aims and objectives. As such, it is embedded in the discursive practices that order and structure knowledge in particular ways. These ways serve particular interests that can be linked to relations of class, race, and gender. McLaren illuminates this point when he comments that discursive practices "refer to the rules by which discourses [or a family of concepts] are formed, rules that govern what can be said and what must remain unsaid, who can speak with authority and who must listen" (1989:180). Described in this way, power is not simply a form of repression or a judicial concept exercised in state and policy formation. Rather, because power is rooted in the nexus of discursive practices, it produces sanctioned and legitimized truths, or, as Foucault terms them, "regimes of truth." Power is thus "the will to truth"; it is a political construction of **what counts and passes as truth itself**. In this case, then, ideology is not the distortion of truth, but **the production of truth**.

In *Power/Knowledge,* Foucault makes this point clearer when he argues that as power produces knowledge

> we are also subjected to truth in the sense in which it is truth that makes the laws, that produces the true discourses which, at least partially, decides, transmits and itself extends upon the effect of power. In the end, we are judged, condemned, classified, determined in our undertakings, destined to a certain mode of living or dying, as a function of the true discourses which are the bearers of the specific effects of power. (1986:230)

Furthermore, we participate in certain ways of living because the meanings and power relations inscribed in "regimes of truth" are incorporated in our bodies, controlling our actions and attitudes from within (McLaren 1989). Power is not in our minds or in our belief systems, but at the deepest levels of our gestures, desires, habits, and bodies.

McLaren (1989) provides more insight into this idea with his notion of ideology as ritual performance. He begins by arguing that ideology can be understood not only in cognitive terms, but also with respect to the politics of pleasure and the body, which he connects to ritual performances at the level of everyday life. Not to consider ideology in relation to the body, says McLaren, is to reduce false beliefs into "inadequate information" or "distorted communication." In this way, McLaren proposes that a dialectical relationship exists between ideology and social and cultural practices. Thus, he can claim a relationship between the corporeality of the body and ideology. For example, he asserts that "[rituals] are undeniably ideological because each time you gloss your behavior with a ritual outlay, you are reinforcing a particular structural relationship" (1989:191).

In the sense that ideology is a ritual and hence a bodily performance, power must be understood as producing knowledge that is written into the body. This view suggests that meanings are inscribed, constructed, and reconstituted in a ''politics of the flesh'' (McLaren 1988). Therefore, the body is a site for producing and reproducing subjectivities in relation to particular forms of knowledge. In theorizing the relationship among ideology, power, and the body, McLaren's work not only advances our understanding of how knowledge is socially constructed, but also explains how it is connected to the domain of popular pleasure. How do the meanings and the power relations that underlie particular forms of knowledge come to be inscribed into the body in ways that structure and order subjectivities around particular notions of ''the people'' and ''the popular,'' which in turn are tied to some conceptualization of democracy? In other words, if the body plays an essential role in the formation of subjectivities, **how does its ideological constitution structure emotional investments around particular meanings of democracy that are consistent with the dominant society**?

CBOs and the Production of "the People"

Perhaps we may begin to answer this question by showing the relationship between the body and popular culture in the political construction of ''the popular'' and ''the people.'' Underlying this conception is the assumption that when the body is understood to be an integral part in constructing subjectivities, ideological practices cannot be reduced to the production of meaning and truth, but must be extended to include the production of pleasure. Therefore, emotional investments in forms of knowledge and their meanings are tied to the structuring and ordering of pleasure, and thus to the mobilizing of needs and desires. Yet, if subjectivities are to be understood as constituted through the production of both meaning and pleasure, ideological practices must be anchored in the everyday experiences of social groups. In this way, social groups produce and give meaning to their social and material experiences through cultural forms (e.g., music, dance, dress, religion, food). Through these cultural forms, rituals produce pleasure. Hence, they mobilize needs and desires in ways that construct everyday experiences, and therefore subjectivities, around particular notions of ''the people'' and ''the popular.''

I wish to emphasize that this process takes place within institutional sites or public spheres (church, school, mass media, community-organization, family, and political system). In these sites, the meanings and pleasures produced and mobilized through cultural forms are not fixed, but are interrupted continuously, because conflicting social interests underlie the production of meaning and the mobilization of pleasures. As a result, dominant and subordinate groups within CBOs struggle politically and contest the way in which meanings and pleasures are produced and mobilized. That is, they contest the social interests and ways of life that are implicated in particular meanings of ''the people'' and ''the popular,'' which in turn are linked to certain definitions of democracy. Yet, in order to make authoritative their definition of democracy, and likewise their notion of "the people" and "the popular," dominant groups maintain and exercise domination **by regulating how meaning and pleasure are produced**.

Dominant groups regulate the production of meaning and pleasure through the process of hegemony, which involves the organizing of consent (see McLaren 1989). In turn, the organizing of consent is tied to defining and redefining the ideological terrain of popular culture. Within this terrain, meaning and pleasure are produced and regulated in relation to the formation of consent. For example, in an effort to organize consent in relation to their interpretation of democracy, neopopulists redefine "the people" by rewriting the histories of racial minorities and women. They do so by arguing that the histories of marginalized groups embody a compassion for humanity. This is the case, say the neopopulists, because the level of involvement in popular cultural forms is more spontaneous and more immediate than the level of bourgeois participation in middlebrow and high culture.

Here, however, the neopopulists define compassion in relation to an ethic of care that emphasizes individual feelings of love, friendship, and community. Through participation in the popular forms of subordinate groups, the pleasures and emotions produced are structured in ways that legitimate and reaffirm individuality. By redefining "the people" in this way, neopopulists can reduce the concept of democracy to individual rights, as distinct from collective rights.

Finally, the organizing of consent is also a pedagogical process, in that the working and reworking of popular culture are connected to specific ways of learning and teaching in everyday life. Later, I will discuss how the ethic of care, as defined by neopopulists, structures and orders the pedagogical processes of community organizing, but for now I will examine the relationship of this ethic to hegemony, or more specifically to consent.

Referring to consent as a pedagogical process, Giroux and Simon stated that "as a form of practical learning, [it is] secured through the elaboration of particular discourses, needs, appeals, values, and interests that must address and transform the concerns of subordinate groups" (1989:8). In this way, there is a pedagogical connection between how everyday experiences become constituted around particular definitions of "the people" and "the popular," and how those experiences, inside and outside CBOs, are shaped by popular culture.

This connection means that the moral leadership of dominant groups is tied to their struggle to organize the consent of subordinate groups around their definition of "the people" and "the popular" in both pedagogical and political terms. In this particular sense, hegemony--the forming of consent around dominant definitions of "the people" and "the popular"--is pedagogically organized through uneven negotiation and compromise between dominant and subordinate groups. Within this process of negotiating and compromising, dominant groups ideologically structure and privilege what constitutes legitimate knowledge in the teaching and learning process; thereby they regulate the meanings and pleasures produced in the cultural forms of subordinate groups. In this way, dominant groups legitimate their ideology and culture through the cultural forms of subordinate groups. That is, they shift the culture of subordinate groups onto their ideological and cultural terrain. In doing so, they sever the cultures of subordinate groups from any radical impulse they may have had, and connect them to more conservative tendencies.

In view of these considerations, the dominant ideology cannot be seen as existing in a pure form. It is compromised and "decentered" by its selective inclusion of elements represented in subordinate cultures. At the same time, subordinate groups do not totally resist the dominant culture because they "have to negotiate and compromise around both those elements it gives over to the dominant culture and those it maintains as representative of its own interests and desires" (Giroux and Simon 1989:9). Resistance, then, is part of the process of hegemony. McLaren emphasizes this point when he says that resistance is not a reaction to hegemony, but is part of the process of negotiation. Furthermore, this process "works through the ideology-shaping characteristics [of the CBOs], and is often the means by which hegemony is secured" (1989:197). At precisely this point, community organizing as a form of critical pedagogy can empower subordinate groups to learn how such contradictions shape their day-to-day experiences and subjectivity. In addition, within the limits and the possibilities of these contradictions, community organizing can assist disempowered groups in constructing new meanings and pleasures that lead to emancipatory forms of collective action.

In short, popular culture is an important terrain for struggling over the formation of consent in relation to definitions of "the people" and "the popular." Inasmuch as "the people" and "the popular" are defined and redefined through particular ways of teaching and learning, popular culture is a site of struggle and controversy. Although Tony Bennett does not address the pedagogical dimensions, he agrees with this view insofar as he argues against approaches that define popular culture by linking it to the specific types of cultural activities held to be popular "in the sense of exhibiting a particular relationship to "the people"--where "the people" is defined as a particular social group" (1986:8). If I may oversimplify Bennett somewhat, he appears to oppose tying "the people" and "the popular" to any essentialist reading of popular culture based on class, or even on race or gender. Instead he argues

> in favor of an approach which keeps these terms [e.g., "the people" and "the popular"] definitionally empty...in the interest of filling them politically... According to such a view, popular culture can be defined only abstractly as a site--always changing and variable in its constitution and organization--

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> which, since it provides one of the key terrains for the struggle over the political production of "the people" and "the popular," cannot be more precisely specified in terms of these concepts. The meanings of these terms...can never be singly or definitionally fixed inasmuch as their use is always caught up in a struggle to determine precisely which senses of "the people" and "the popular" will carry weight politically in terms of their ability to organize different social forces into an active political alliance. (1986:8)

Extending these insights of Bennett, I would argue along with other critical theorists (Giroux 1989b; Giroux and Simon 1989a; Mclaren 1989a; McLaren 1989a; McLaren 1989b) that pedagogy is a form of cultural politics in that it involves the working and reworking of the ideological terrain of popular culture. It functions to organize consent around definitions of "the people" and "the popular." As Giroux and Simon explain, "It is precisely in the relationship between pedagogy and popular culture that the important understanding arises of making the pedagogical more political and the political more pedagogical" (1989a:221). As a form of cultural politics, pedagogy represents a site of struggle. This struggle concerns how the processes of learning and teaching are organized to produce forms of knowledge as well as to mobilize needs and desires in ways that structure and link emotional investments around particular meanings of "the people" and "the popular." Community organizing also constitutes a pedagogical practice that is involved in organizing consent around particular definitions of these terms. Like pedagogy, it also does so by working and reworking the ideological terrain of popular cultures. Before exploring the emancipatory possibilities of community organizing, I wish first to critique how some neopopulist writers (Boyte, Booth & Max 1986; Boyte & Riessman 1986; Evans & Boyte 1983) structure and order community organizing pedagogically. By understanding this process, we can begin to see how they produce, regulate, and legitimate needs and desires, as well as mobilizing them, around certain notions of "the people" and "the popular." In addition, we will see how their ideas embody particular social interests that inform their democratic project.

Neopopulism and Value-Based Community Organizing

To begin, neopopulists such as Boyte and his colleagues believe that community organizing must move beyond protest to the rebuilding of relations (Boyte 1984:36). Boyte concludes, "In recent years, many in the fields of community organization and community development have developed such a sensibility, concluding that to do more than call a halt to further erosion of community and community values requires attentiveness to the **renewal** of deep values and relations" (Boyte 1984:34 my emphasis).

Although I agree with Boyte's observation up to a point, I remain cautious when he uses the word "renewal." This word suggests that values inscribed in cultural forms have a fixed content; it implies that its ideological terrain is not the subject of constant political working and reworking. For example, when referring to community organizing, Boyte seems to propose this idea in his question: "How are memories of older values and traditions revived through such a process [i.e., how is community organizing made relevant to the present world]?" (1984:36). For Boyte, community organizing simply restores past values to life, but in a way that positions them as a standard by which to measure the present. In pedagogical terms, this means that learning and teaching, in the context of community organizing, involve the transmission of past values inscribed in particular forms of knowledge.

Such a view seriously neglects the role of community organizing as a pedagogical process in producing, regulating, and legitimating values. Moreover, this perspective neglects contemporary popular culture as a site of struggle and controversy, and therefore as a way to link the present critically with the past. Bennett writes in agreement that the "past is not a yardstick by which to measure the present. If it is allowed to become so, there is no means by which either the successes or failures of past struggles can be made to connect productively with those of the present" (1986:11). He concludes: "The discovery of continuities between past and present is not worth a candle if it results in discontinuities being conceived moralistically or represented in the forms of a fall or failure or a lack on the part of 'the people' today" (1986:11). By not including contemporary popular culture in the pedagogical development of community organizing, neopopulists avoid understanding how CBOs shape and occasionally secure the often contradictory relations between subordinate groups and the politics of everyday life.

Underlying the view of resurrecting past values is a theory of social change, which provides further insight into the neopopulists' understanding of the relationship between culture, politics, and pedagogy--specifically how this intersection structures community organizing practices. Before discussing this topic, however, I wish to show how Boyte's theory of social change is influenced by Ferdinand Tonnies' classic study of *gemeinschaft und gesellschaft*. Tonnies stated that his purpose was "to study the sentiments and motives which draw people to each other" (1955:3). Therefore, he argued that social relationships involving *gemeinschaft* were governed by "natural will"--that is, by sensations, feelings, and instincts derived from physiological and psychological processes, which he believed were inborn and inherited. On the other hand, *gesellschaft* involved social relationships governed by "rational will"--the deliberate, goal-oriented, calculative product of intellect (Saunders 1986:86). The fundamental part of Tonnies' thesis was that the sentiments characterizing *gemeinschaft*, which (he argued) flowed from the natural bonds of blood, neighborhood, and religious belief, were being torn asunder by the growth of industrial capitalism, "which puts in its place a precarious unity based on monetary calculation and the resolute pursuit of self-interest" (Saunders 1986:87).

Boyte (and his colleagues) draw a conclusion similar to that reached by Tonnies, but they view those characteristics of *gesellschaft* as destroying democratic public life. The individualism and the impersonal relations characteristic of modern capitalism, says Boyte, are destroying those distinguishing qualities of *gemeinschaft*. He proposes that social change under modern capitalism "disrupts and weakens close ties to neighbors, friends, and relatives. It makes any community tied to place, and to the face to face relations and institutions associated with place, infinitely more difficult" (Boyte 1984:32).

Inasmuch as active citizenship is based on face-to-face, egalitarian relationships, Boyte believes that the values and processes underlying urbanization, industrialization, and bureaucratization break down the natural bonds of family, neighborhood, and religious beliefs, and threaten the building of participatory democracy. Boyte concludes that because democratic politics is mediated by large bureaucracies and their experts, "politics resembles a marketplace where citizens become consumers and are encouraged to think of themselves in the most narrowly self-interested of terms" (1986:190).

To reclaim and redefine citizens' participation in public life, Boyte and Evans propose what they call "value-based community organizing." They state that this method "adapts participatory understanding of democracy to the dilemmas of modern culture and the era of large scale institutions...recognizing such terms as 'community,' 'tradition,' and 'public life.'" In other words, this mode of organizing seeks to revive community, which they define as involving dense and textured relationships, or close relations that imply face-to-face contact, commonality of purpose, familiarity, and dependability (1986:187). The aim of value-based organizing, then, is to return power to "the people" by returning to decentralized forms of decision-making and political power.

Although decentralization is crucial to the formation of a radical democratic politics, it is certainly not enough, and in this context Boyte's analysis is misleading. It assumes that decentralized forms of power characteristic of "town meetings" are in themselves democratic and emancipatory. This assumption ignores the ways in which forms of domination and social control exercised in everyday life are organized and reorganized through decentralized power. Frazer hints at this idea when she explains: "Modern power is essentially 'capillary'...it operates at the lowest extremities of the social body in everyday social practices. This suffices to rule out state-centered and economistic political praxes, since these praxes presuppose that power resides solely in the state or economy" (1989:18). Therefore, to understand how decentralized power is exercised in everyday life, we must know first how its constitution and reconstitution intersect dialectically with the production of meaning and the mobilization of needs and desires in ways that legitimate particular social interests in everyday life. By ignoring this point, neopopulists fail to consider how decentralized forms of power and decision-making may "function to favor the reproduction of the dominant society by establishing the boundaries within which conflict can take place and questions can be raised" (Giroux 1983:189).

In the discussion that follows, I wish to show that the particular definition of the ethic of care, which neopopulists recommend as a key component of value-based community organizing, functions to reproduce dominant interests by establishing the boundaries within which conflict can take place and questions can be raised. The neopopulists' understanding of the ethic of care is undialectical; thus it produces meanings, as well as mobilizing needs and desires, in ways that structure emotional investments around dominant ways of living, and thereby reproduces the dominant social order. In pedagogical terms, how groups learn the ethic of care is truncated in the neopopulist sense: it does not extend beyond groups learning humanistic relationships. Such a view neglects the other side of pedagogy, which centers on how groups produce and invest emotionally in particular ideological meanings that construct caring relationships (Giroux 1981). Further, what social interests and power relations underlie the ideological meanings that constitute caring? Failure to give attention to these aspects of learning an ethic of care drastically undermines its possibilities for creating community-organizing practices around radical and pluralist democratic notions of "the people" and "the popular."

Neopopulism, The Ethic of Care, and Community Organizing: Democratic Implications

Neopopulists believe that if democratic renewal is to occur in the social fabric of neighborhood traditions and practices, there must be a "fundamental new way of thinking about issues of rights, justice, commitment and personal transformation" (Evans and Boyte 1984:89). Thus, in their view, the "narrow polarities" between individual dignity and social ties within liberal political discourse must be transcended. Boyte and Evans believe that women's moral development, as presented by Carol Gilligan in *In a Different Voice* has possibilities for such a project. According to Gilligan, women's moral development differs from that of men: whereas men's moral considerations celebrate "separation, autonomy, individualism and individual rights," women's considerations are centered around connectiveness and mutual responsibility to other people; considerations which constitute an "ethic of caring."

For Boyte and Evans, the implication of this ethic for the "narrow polarities" in liberal political discourse is that individuals can assert rights while still remaining grounded in the life of their communities. Stated in another way, an ethic of caring encourages people to participate in a political community of free social spaces, such as CBOs, so that they remain empathetic to the different needs, desires, and affects of others and collectively can pursue a common sense of justice. They conclude, "[From] such a perspective, then, to rebuild community in America on an understanding of its complexity, its pluralism, and the importance of small-scale community based institutions is the agenda for the renewal and recovery of solidarity in the pursuit of justice" (1984:218).

Boyte and Evans' particular reading of the ethic of care suggests that it is the basis for solidarity, and as such is the foundation for pursuing some common or universalistic notion of justice. Nevertheless, we should consider whether the learning of connectiveness and mutual responsibility to other people, as a basis for pursuing a common understanding of justice, depoliticizes and trivializes memories of human suffering and forms of knowledge and struggle, with respect to race, gender, and class. If that is the case, what are the consequences of their reading of this ethic for transforming CBOs into a radical democratic social movement? Perhaps Seyla Benhabib, in her elaboration of the possibilities of an ethic of care for universalistic, contractarian, moral theories of justice, can help to clarify whether Boyte and Evan's argument for democratic participation centers around pursuing a universalistic concept of justice.

Like Boyte and Evans, Benhabib argues that universalistic, contractarian, Western moral theories of justice, from Hobbes to Rawls, view needs and desires as personal matters, and therefore outside the public domain of justice and rights. Such theories are premised on seeing the self in non-relational terms; therefore, they defend the right of rational individuals to "privacy and autonomy of self" through a public system of rights and duties. In this public domain of justice, the self is understood in terms of the "generalized other." That is, the individual's concrete needs, desires, and affect, or the "the narrative history of self and its motivations," are abstracted from their historical, social, and lived context (Benhabib 1986).

When abstracted in this way, justice comes to be tied to abstract conceptual rules. Benhabib believes that such an understanding of justice is based on what she terms a "monological model of communicative need interpretation." That is, the concrete needs, desires, and hopes which are linked to specific memories of human suffering are excluded from the public sphere of justice. In this process, feelings of compassion or empathy that may occur because of identifying with the pain and suffering of the Other are numbed. This numbing occurs because such feelings are suspected of being laden with values, and therefore inappropriate for determining what is just or unjust. Such an understanding assumes that justice is value-free and therefore objective. It presupposes that justice is based upon a technocratic rationality or a set of universal laws that are derived through mathematical logic and scientific fact-gathering. According to Benhabib, this way of defining justice has been the cornerstone for the interpretation of needs by the administrative procedures of bureaucratic organizations. This supposedly value-neutral way of interpreting needs masks and therefore depoliticizes dominant interests in society. As she says, administrative procedures are encoded surreptitiously with the experiences of a specific group of subjects.

Rather than abandoning universalistic, contractual theories of justice, Benhabib argues that such theories should be rethought in relation to what she calls a "dialogical communicative ethic of need interpretation." That is, "private non-institutional norms" of love, friendship, and care (what she terms an "ethic of caring and responsibility," which has been restricted to personal matters) should be introduced into the public domain of justice. In this reconsideration, the self is referred to as the "concrete other," as opposed to the generalized other. The specific memories of human suffering and the needs, desires, and hopes that they embody are no longer abstracted from their historical and lived contexts. Justice here becomes tied to the concrete daily life of individuals.

Benhabib states that justice as a "dialogical communicative ethic of need interpretation" is defined around pluralities and differences "without endorsing all pluralities and differences as morally and political valid." At this point, she suggests the concept of "universalizability procedures" as a way of determining which differences and pluralities are morally and politically valid. By including the notion of consent in universalizability procedures, Benhabib illustrates the importance of this concept for cooperatively pursuing a universalistic understanding of justice. She writes:

> We must interpret consent not as an end-goal but as a process for the cooperative generation of truth or validity. The core intuition behind modern universalizability procedures is not that everybody could or would agree to the same set of principles, but that these principles have been adopted as a result of a procedure, whether of moral reasoning or of public debate, that we are already to deem reasonable or fair. It is not the result of the process of moral judgment alone that counts but the process for the attainment of such judgment which plays a role in the validity and...moral worth. (1989-90: 12)

Her argument that consent must be included in universalizability procedures rests on the assumption that an ethic of care is crucial for heterogeneous communities in order to create solidarity among themselves. By creating solidarity through a cooperative and dialogical process of rational argumentation, **communities of difference can pursue together a common meaning of justice**.

It is assumed that if solidarity is to be created and if a common understanding of justice is to be reached, **difference first must be reconciled**. Benhabib states that her reading of the ethic of care allows this to occur. Again through individual love, friendship, and care, people relate to one another no longer as alien external others, but as individuals belonging to a common species. As a result, individual subjects no longer relate to one another as objects: they recognize these objects as like themselves, or themselves as like these objects. Benhabib does not explain, however, that individual subjects belong to groups which are unequal in power. Hence, certain groups can produce and regulate certain forms of knowledge about themselves and others. Insofar as institutions may constitute particular relations of power, the ideological and affective meanings and social relations that characterize particular institutional definitions of solidarity may in fact repress differences in the name of sameness. One way of determining whether Benhabib's reading does this is to examine its pedagogical implications.

Benhabib's interpretation of the ethic of care is pedagogically problematic. It is undialectical in its truncated view regarding the epistemological dimensions of compassion. Benhabib's theory falters in its lack of conceptualizing how individuals "learn" compassion, especially in its overriding concern to develop nonhierarchial or nonalienating social relationships. As a pedagogical approach, it is not interested in how particular forms of knowledge (both rational and affective) are produced and regulated in regard to specific ways of learning compassionate social relationships. Benhabib emphasizes the importance of individual feelings of love, friendship, and care in creating the solidarity necessary to pursue justice. Her theory, however, neglects the way in which these feelings are institutionally constituted and learned in relation to the construction of particular meanings and desires that legitimate particular relations of power.

Neopopulist notions of value-based community organizing echo some of Benhabib assumptions. When referring to value-based community organizing, Evans and Boyte write that "in the context of a pluralist and diversified organizing such organizing introduces people to other communities in ways that allow serious dialogue" (1984:137). Later, however, in quoting a community organizer, they comment that an ethic of caring is grounded in "foundation[al] experiences, which people share beyond differences in race, ethnicity, sex and so forth" (1984:137).

To argue that an ethic of care is grounded in experiences beyond group differences is to situate neopopulism's notion of value-based community organizing around the political project of modernity. One of the assumptions that informs the populist view of community organizing is based on a foundational claim which links the desirability of democracy to the "essential" nature of human beings. In this ethic, "natural" human qualities such as friendship, love, and care are understood as the foundation of democracy. Yet this view presupposes that social agents are unified subjects. In the universalism of this ethic, and the political project to which it is tied, human nature is understood as undifferentiated and the individual as a bearer of rights (Laclau and Mouffe 1985; Mouffe 1988).

In an effort to overcome the abstract universalism of political modernity, neopopulism, and its view of caring, reinforce the individual as a bearer of rights while neglecting the rights of collectivities. This is the case because the ethic of care, in the neopopulists' view, is based on the "individualized concrete other" as opposed to the "collective concrete other." According to Fraser, this means that the ethic of caring "attends to the specificity of a unique individual with norms and feelings which govern those interactions [around] those of love, care and friendship" (1983:428). On the other hand, the ethic of solidarity emphasizes the specificity of a collective. Here the stress is on "the cultural specificity of the narrative resources [and vocabularies] available for the construction of individual life-stories or group identities and solidarities" (Fraser 1983:428).

If democracy is to take up questions of pluralism and difference, the universalism and foundationalism of political modernity must be abandoned. To put it less harshly, "Universalism must not be rejected but particularized" (Mouffe 1988:36). Such a reconsideration provides the context for deepening the democratic project to be because of its stress on the contradictory nature of social relationships and effects of power. This emphasis helps us to understand community organizing contextually and as part of the very production of meaning. Does such a position celebrate relativism or nihilism? I would argue that democracy be defined less monolithically in post-structuralist terms as an arena of conflicting discourses which can become a central point of reference from which to imagine a better society and to struggle to redefine the political. This conception of democracy can provide social agents with standards by which to distinguish the just and the unjust, the legitimate and the illegitimate. In addition, political struggle in this view can be seen not only in terms of the right to access, but also with respect to new forms of subordination and inequalities, derived from the implanting and expansion of capitalist social relations and the growing intervention of the state into everyday life.

The democratic tradition, then, does not have an unvarying set of characteristics, but draws upon a variety of discourses and practices that form us as subjects (Mouffe 1988). As Mouffe explains, politics then is reconsidered as the "creation of new usages for the key terms of a given tradition, and of their use in new language games that make new forms of life possible" (Mouffe 1988:40).

In pedagogical terms, community organizing as a form of cultural politics must be oriented towards reinterpreting and repositioning social relations, such as liberty and equality, in ways that move the framework of individual rights toward democratic rights. In such a process, community organizing deepens and expands democracy by creating community-based sites of democratic resistance. In addition, community organizing must unite diverse democratic struggles. If this convergence is to occur, community organizing as a form of pedagogy must understand the intersection between culture, politics, and power in the production of subjectivities. Although Mouffe does not mention the centrality of pedagogy in forming this counter-hegemonic project, she summarizes the necessity for creating new subjectivities around such a democratic convergence. She writes, for example:

> If the task of radical democracy is indeed to deepen the democratic revolution and link together diverse democratic struggles, such a task requires the creation of new subject-positions that would allow the common articulation, for example, of antiracism, antisexism, and anticapitalism. These struggles do not spontaneously converge, and in order to establish democratic equivalences, a new common sense is necessary, which would transform the identity of different groups so that the demands of each group could be articulated with those of others according to the principle of democratic equivalence. For it is not a matter of establishing a mere alliance between given interest but of actually modifying the very identity of these forces. (1988: 42)

Establishing a convergence among diverse democratic struggles carries the assumption that an ethic of care must be situated within an ethic of solidarity constructed around the concept of difference. In this case, difference must be oriented towards a **material practice and a language of justice, liberty, and equality** that struggles against multiple forms of subordination and inequality. I also would like to emphasize that to situate care within an ethic of solidarity is not to dismiss feelings such as love, friendship, and care. Rather, community organizers must establish conditions in which oppressed groups can critically reconstruct their affective emotions from their "dangerous memories." This process requires that community organizers develop a critical pedagogy for community organizing.

A Critical Pedagogy for Community Organizing: Its Possibilities for Collective Action

To construct difference, and therefore solidarity, from the dangerous memories of marginalized groups requires that community organizing develop a critical notion of pedagogy. Such a notion must explore how, in daily life, social class intersects across other vectors of power, particularly with regard to race and gender. Community organizing as a pedagogical task must affirm a democratic politics around "the people" and "the popular" that can contest the various ways in which race, gender, and class inequalities are inscribed at every level of daily life. Therefore, to construct forms of collective action that are grounded in this sort of democratic politics, community organizers must be reconsidered as transformative intellectuals. By regarding themselves in this way, the organizers reaffirm their solidarity with the marginalized, because, as Giroux states, transformative intellectuals are bearers of "dangerous memories," meaning intellectuals who keep alive the memory of human suffering along with the forms of knowledge and struggles in which suffering was shaped and contested" (Giroux 1988:99). In order to construct the conditions necessary to create transformative intellectuals, community organizers must begin to consider what a critical pedagogy for community organizing should look like. Thus, the present task is to outline what such a pedagogy would involve and to describe its role in constructing collective action.

A critical pedagogy of community organizing must be linked to what Giroux calls a **pedagogy of difference** and a **pedagogy for difference**. Giroux says that the theoretical task of educators--in this case community organizers--is to understand how difference is constructed. This task entails understanding how the dangerous memories and the community narratives of various groups in American society are excluded and marginalized through various representations and practices that name and legitimate. In addition, a pedagogy of difference must also speak to "how representations and practices of difference are actively learned, internalized, challenged, or transformed" (1989:142). By understanding this process, community organizers lay the groundwork for developing a pedagogy for difference.

In the context of a pedagogy for difference, community organizers must interrogate critically the silences and tensions existing between (on one hand) the hegemonic discourses and grand narratives that construct the official language (e.g., the ethic of care) of CBOs and (on the other) the self-portrayals of subordinate groups that appear in forgotten memories, experiences, and community narratives (Giroux 1989b). A pedagogy for difference, however, must not only understand how difference is constructed between the official discourse of CBOs and the many voices of subordinate groups; it also must understand the contradictions within the multiple and intersecting subject-positions (e.g., race, class, and gender) that historically and culturally have constructed the specific conditions characterizing marginalized groups themselves. Giroux concludes:

> The voices that characterize various groups of students are not one piece, reducible merely to the categories of class, race, or gender; they are produced within cultural formations that create historically constituted subject-positions which are often shifting and multiple. These subject-positions are constructed within horizons of meaning, habit, and practice that are available in ways both determined and limited by the discourse, cultural context, and historically specific relations that constitute the conditions and parameters of student voice. [This] provides the basis for making the practice of subjectification problematic and the object of political and theoretical reflection. (Giroux 1989:142)

Insofar as the practice of subjectification is problematic and the object of political and theoretical reflection, it is here that community organizing as a critical pedagogy must engage critically and construct new forms of collective action. Yet, if this is to occur, a pedagogy of and for difference must be tied to a specific form of authority. It is assumed that authority represents a terrain of struggle, in that it is constituted around knowledge and power relations. Giroux asserts: "Authority exists as a terrain of struggle and as such reveals rather than hides the dialectical nature of its interests and possibilities" (1989b:137). In this way, the concept of authority offers a rationale for viewing CBOs as public spheres connected to ongoing movements and struggles for democracy (Giroux 1989b). From this perspective, the concept of authority can be redefined around emancipatory authority and the concept of community organizers as transformative intellectuals. In elaborating this point, Giroux stresses the importance of a threefold model of the emancipatory authority, which is relevant for constructing a critical pedagogy for community organizing.

Authority, Giroux (1989a) states, is a form of legitimation. Community organizers embody forms of authority that are connected intimately to a particular vision of CBOs in the broader community and society. For this reason, community organizers make visible and problematic the underlying meanings given to officially-sanctioned languages and values. They call attention to "the rules that govern what can be said and what must remain unsaid, who can speak with authority and who must listen" (McLaren 1988:180) with respect to the political construction of "the people" and "the popular."

Giroux introduces a second aspect of authority that is appropriate for community organizing. He contends that the concept of authority raises issues regarding the ethical and political foundation of CBOs. That is, the concept of authority helps to bring to the surface the social and political function that community organizers "serve in elaborating and enforcing a particular view of [CBO] authority, one that legitimates a particular form of life" (1989:136). Giroux also argues that the concept of authority gives "theoretical leverage" for analyzing the intersection between domination and power. It provides the basis from which to question the difference between (on one hand) the shared meanings elaborated by community organizers to legitimate their view of authority and (on the other) the effects of their actions "at the level of actualized pedagogical practices" (Giroux,1989:136) as expressed in the daily life of CBOs. The fact that pedagogical practices have concrete effects in daily life presupposes that **such practices are central in constructing forms of collective action**. To explain this relationship more clearly, I shall explore briefly the connection between pedagogy, popular culture, community organizing, and collective action.

Pedagogy, Community Organizing, and Collective Action

Some neopopulists argue correctly that a significant number of new leftists "who study movements...[neglect]...issues of democratic values or democratic goals entirely" (Evans and Boyte 1986:14). Neopopulist critics situate this neglect

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in the left's refusal to see that the values and traditions of community-based organizations can serve as a basis from which to build social movements. They cite the work of Piven and Cloward as an example of such an over sight. Piven and Cloward's influential book, *Poor People's Movement*, is described as suggesting to its readers "that efforts to build insurgent organizations are themselves counterproductive to the process of disruptive defiance that [the authors] think is the essence of social movement"(Boyte 1980:178).

Piven and Cloward state, for example, that efforts to build insurgent organizations are counterproductive because the poor lack individual and organizational resources with which to favorably negotiate their rights within the political system. This situation leaves disruptive forms of collective action (legitimate/illegitimate or formal/informal) as the most effective strategy. Against this point of view, neopopulists argue that people develop skills, knowledge, and confidence through experiences with community institutions. More central to their criticism, however, is that within community institutions "people draw upon rich cultural resources and traditions from the past, unearthing subversive themes of protest, dignity, dissent, and self-assertion, and fashioning them into foundations for a new culture" (Boyte 1980:179).

Throughout this essay, I have expressed a profound disagreement with neopopulism's understanding of the intersection between knowledge and power relations in the structuring and ordering of everyday experience. Even so, I agree with them fundamentally that community institutions, such as CBOs, play a crucial role in the formation of collective action. Although neopopulists view culture as mediating between social conditions and empirically-observed collective action, I still emphasize that within CBOs, actors' goals are socially constructed and their choices and decisions are made **within a particular environment of obstacles and possibilities** (Melucci 1990). Actors are linked to their environment, however, by expectations. In this regard, Alberto Melucci writes that expectations "are socially constructed, [and] enable actors to relate to their external world. Thus, any theory of collective action which incorporates the concept of expectation presupposes a theory of identity" (1990:34). Insofar as community organizers serve in elaborating and enforcing a particular view of CBO authority, one that legitimates a particular form of life, this question arises: What expectations, and therefore what identities, are neopopulists constructing socially through their pedagogy of value-based community organizing?

I have discussed already how the ethic of care is the principal form of knowledge that constructs the pedagogy of value-based community organizing. Again, this pedagogy emphasizes creation of solidarity through individualized (and largely unproblematized) forms of love, friendship and care. The central concern is that people no longer relate to one another as alien, external others, but as individuals belonging to a common species. Therefore, when this pedagogy of community organizing is linked to a political project of democracy, democracy ultimately transforms culturally-specific needs of collectivities into individual needs by claiming that there are universal values which cut across race, gender, and class differences. ACORN, for example, a neopopulist organization involved in urban struggles, published the following statement: "Rather than organizing around racism, we involve our members in campaigns that affect all low- and moderate-income people, building solidarity" (1986:193). The assumption here is that individuals, rather than collectivities, are seen as bearers of democratic rights.

Manual Castells (1983) shows how the prevailing of individual rights over collective rights was a major source of tension when Alinsky-inspired neopopulists attempted to incorporate grass-roots black urban movements and institutions into their organizations. Castells adds, "When such a merger was tried in a single organization on the basis of the ideology of people's unity, as in the case of the 'Alinsky Model,' the attempt failed" (1983:66).

Again, in his study of neighborhood mobilizations in San Francisco's Mission District, Castells describes similar results when Alinsky-styled neopopulists tried to incorporate Hispanic community-based institutions into their "people's" organization. In this case, community organizers sought to build an autonomous militant organization by undercutting the patronage-based constituency of existing community-based organizations. Organizers replaced these old ties by satisfying residents' individual economic demands through new organizational channels that they established with City Hall and philanthropic institutions. This help made their militant organization the new source of authority and legitimacy in poor and minority neighborhoods. In his concluding remarks on the subject, Castells notes,

> People's unity neither results from the piecemeal satisfaction of different demands that are taken for granted nor by excluding any process of cultural transformation aimed at the redefinition of needs. The social logic of interest groups is not superseded by their coalition. The Mission Community organizers learned too late the crucial historical distinction between popular unity and political tradeoffs. (1983:130)

The problematic element here is that the focus on individual needs and rights makes it impossible to read the race, gender and class subtext that undergirds putatively universal values. These values, in fact, **function to reinforce dominant interests and privilege**. Castells agrees with this observation when he suggests that Alinsky-styled neopopulism "divided people's energies with fights between different groups to win control over narrowly defined programmes that framed popular needs into bureaucratic categories" (1983:134). Insofar as we can see how needs come to be framed into bureaucratic categories, we can see how community organizers become technicians who combine the ethic of care with what Si Kahn calls a "popular technique of decision-making." In *Organizing: A Guide for*

Grassroots Leaders. Kahn says that as a popular technique of decision-making, "consensus [means] everyone [agreeing] on the issue, the strategy, the tactics, the next steps, the division of responsibility" (1982:147-148). In this way, community organizing is reduced to performance-oriented skills that pose goals and objectives in ways which maximize resources. Procedural rules then guarantee that consensus structured around the ethic of care will mask forms of knowledge and power relations that legitimate dominant interests and privilege. With this point in mind, the particular ethic of care, as conceived by neopopulists, reduces the pedagogy of value-based community organizing to producing forms of collective action that are concerned with achieving the needs and rights of particular individuals within the existing dominant order.

In this context, the pedagogy of value-based organizing constructs forms of collective action that are oriented towards soliciting demands for inclusion in the benefits and rules of the present political system. The forms of collective action produced by this pedagogy generally involve disruptive forms of political protest against state actions. Such forms of political protest imply that a system of reference, a set of limits or boundaries, is disrupted. This suggests that the only possible system of reference becomes confrontation with authorities and that collective action simply is reduced to political action (Melucci 1990). By reducing collective action to political action against the state, neopopulism and its notion of value-based community organizing neglects to see how dominant forms of power and knowledge produced by state bureaucracies and capitalist corporations structure and order people's needs and desires in everyday life. Finally, because neopopulists do not understand how their pedagogy functions to legitimate dominant forms of power and knowledge relations, their demands for decentralized power will continue to reinforce dominant interests and privilege in CBOs, urban neighborhoods, and the broader society.

In closing, I argue that the hope of transforming CBOs into democratic public spheres, where people learn to govern and to serve as critical citizens, lies with the development of a critical pedagogy for community organizing. Such a pedagogy works to clarify how knowledge and power come to be inscribed in everyday life; it provides the basis for creating new forms of knowledge and power from which to create emancipatory forms of collective action. Rather than simply reducing collective action to political protest, community organizers as transformative intellectuals must make the dominant networks of power recognizable within the policy or decision-making processes of CBOs and of the wider society.

Although Melucci does not deal directly with pedagogy, he highlights the importance of constructing new forms of collective action that challenge the cultural logic of the dominant institution:

> Decisions within these systems...are based on consensus and guaranteed by procedural rules. In this way, power tends to be made naked by procedures; the greater and more constant the

> need for decisions, and the more they depend upon a growing mass of technical data, the less visible power becomes. It seems to disappear behind a neutral mask of rational measures to achieve a given goal, of technical evidence based upon facts. Against this tendency, collective mobilization forces power into the open and exposes the interest behind its apparently neutral reasoning. (1990:175)

Notes

1. For an elaboration of the relationship between community-based education, organizing, and development, see Edwin Hamilton and Phyllis M. Cunningham (1989).
2. Robert Fisher and Joseph M. Kling (1990) identify five characteristics of North American populism: "It seeks to (1) affirm the ideal of community, (2) restore power back to the local level and the individual, (3) decentralize power in order to provide access to all, (4) oppose the tyranny of excess power, and (5) identify enemy targets that seek to destroy community or ignore the needs of community residents." Populist ideology, which took root in the rural south and midwest, had a strong influence on poor farmers as they struggled against the encroachment of big business into agriculture after the Civil War. (The People's Party and the Farmers' Alliance are the best known early rural populist organizations.) For further discussion of rural populism in the United States see Lawrence Goodwyn (1986). From the 1930s to the present, populist ideology has influenced "progressive" neighborhood movements in urban areas. This movement has been referred to either as urban populism or as neopopulism (see Harry Boyte 1980, 1986). Saul Alinsky was one of the best-known urban populists. For some criticism of urban populism or neopopulism, see Joseph M. Kling and Prudence S. Posner (1990), Robert Fisher (1984), and Manuel Castells (1983).

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Educating Mathematicians in the USSR

By Beverly J. Ferruci, Richard Evans, and Oleg V. Anashkin

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The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) has produced some of the finest mathematical minds in the world (Bogolyubov, 1983; Lozansky, 1987; Zorn, 1988). While Soviet students often attain extraordinary mathematical achievements, higher education in the United States (U. S.) is not always as successful. This article will provide an in-depth look at the process of educating mathematicians at a Soviet University from one of the 15 republics. It will present specific information on the process as well as provide implications for American mathematics educators.

Evangelista (1989) points out that the number of bachelor's degrees in mathematics awarded by American universities and colleges decreased 50 percent during the 1970s and is still only about 40 percent of the 1970 level. The recent report *Everybody Counts* states that in the U. S.: "...the level of mathematical literacy

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(or numeracy) of the general public is completely inadequate to reach either our personal or national aspirations'' (p.6). In fact, the number of U. S. citizens receiving doctorates in the mathematical sciences has decreased nearly 50 percent within the last 20 years (National Research Council, 1989). During the 1970s, approximately 75 percent of the doctorates awarded by American institutions were granted to U. S. citizens. In 1988, 55 percent of all mathematical doctorates were earned by foreign nationals (*Focus*, 1989a).

The national reform movement in mathematics education in the U. S. is largely due to the poor performance of students on national and international comparisons and the declining enrollments of American students in the fields of mathematics, science, and engineering (Crosswhite, 1985; *NCTM News Bulletin*, September 1984-1988; Stevenson, Shin-ying, Stigler, 1986; Commission on Standards, 1989). The *Curriculum and Evaluation Standards for School Mathematics* and its accompanying document, *Professional Standards for Teaching Mathematics,* developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, provides direction for the precollege curriculum. The first book provides an outline of what mathematics topics should be taught, while its companion book explains how the topics should be addressed. At the higher education level, the National Science Foundation (NSF) is playing an active role in helping to improve calculus success at the undergraduate level (Jackson, 1989). The NSF's program, *Undergraduate Curriculum Development in Mathematics Program--Calculus*, has funded more than 25 projects which focus on teaching calculus with changes in the calculus curriculum (Cipra & Zorn, 1989).

As mathematics educators attempt to improve the mathematical competence of students in the U. S., it is important to examine what is done in other countries. This paper addresses higher education in mathematics in the USSR as a means for American educators to study what appears to be a successful system and to make appropriate changes in its programs for preparing mathematicians. Readers interested in precollege education should refer to the articles by Davis, (1979); Evans, Ferrucci, & Cyr, (1986); Vogeli (1986); or Ware & Litwiller, (1986). Although the USSR has not participated in international achievement comparisons, it has participated in the International Mathematics Olympiad with great success, having recently won it again in 1988 (*NCTM News Bulletin*, September 1988). In addition, the Soviet team placed first in the Seventeenth USA Mathematical Olympiad (*Focus*, 1989b), an examination designed to test ingenuity as well as knowledge of mathematics.

It should be noted that there is very little documentation in English pertaining to the educational process at all levels in the USSR. However, insight into the process of higher education in mathematics is provided by examining the program at Simferopol State University (SSU).

Information in this paper is the result of three visits to SSU as well as numerous consultations with Oleg Anashkin of the SSU Mathematics Department, Sergei

Tolkachev of the SSU Computer Science Department and other members of the SSU Mathematics Faculty.

Simferopol State University

Simferopol State University is in Simferopol, capital of the Crimea, and approximately 50 miles from Yalta. It is the largest university in the Crimea, with approximately 8,000 students, of whom 4,000 are enrolled in day classes. Every year, 150 mathematics majors enter the university and five years later approximately 115 complete the program. Of the 150 entering students, 25 major in the field of math/science, 50 major in applied mathematics, and the remaining 75 study to become mathematics teachers at all levels. (According to Lisovsky [1983] only about 30 percent of the secondary school graduates in the USSR enroll in an institution of higher learning. Higher education is free, as is all education in the USSR.) Admissions to various disciplines "are planned by the central ministries on the basis of projected manpower requirements" (Dobson, 1987, p.8).

To attend a Soviet university, students must pass rigorous entrance examinations. Until recently, these examinations depended upon a student's major, but were virtually the same for all universities. In 1988, new rules were established, allowing the Admittance Commission of each university to develop its own entrance examinations.

Each year, 350 students apply for entrance to the mathematics program at SSU. These students must pass entrance examinations dealing with the disciplines of mathematics, physics, and composition (Russian or Ukrainian language and literature, depending on an applicant's native language). The mathematics examination usually has five problems, to be completed within four hours. Examination topics include concepts from algebra, geometry, trigonometry, logarithms, functions, differentiation, integration, and solutions to differential equations. Each of these are studied by all students in Soviet secondary schools. The mathematics examination process requires an applicant to draw a piece of paper which has the mathematics topic listed with three relevant questions. Two are theoretical and the third is an applied problem to solve. Questions can generally be answered from the knowledge acquired in secondary school, but occasionally an inventive and creative solution is required. Although the topics are known in advance, the number of problems and the problems themselves vary with each university. To date, no knowledge of computers has been required.

At an April 1988 meeting with the Deans of the Mathematics Faculty, concern was expressed about the quality of the entering students at SSU. They felt the students were not prepared to undertake the rigorous university curriculum. Deans also expressed concern with the number of applicants (350) and the fact that most were **females**! Few males were thought to have applied because most graduates became precollege teachers and teachers, are poorly paid and held in low esteem, as is often also the case in the U. S. The USSR like, the U. S., has increased salaries of precollege teachers in the last few years to encourage more talented people to pursue teaching careers. However, currently most males major in geography, physics, history, and physical education.

Before taking any university entrance examinations, an applicant selects a program of study from day, evening, or correspondence classes. Similar examinations are given to all applicants, but they are held at different locations and at different times for the various groups.

Full-time students only take day classes, live on campus, receive a stipend from the government, and are not allowed to hold jobs. Students who attend evening classes must be residents of Simferopol and have full time jobs related to their major. These students receive special privileges, including time off from work for examinations. Correspondence students study on their own and come to the university at least twice a year for examinations.

Soviet Credit Hours

Soviet credit hours do not correspond to U. S. credit hours because of differences in the way classes are taught and the length of the classes. All classes are 45 minutes long and taught in pairs for each course. All pairs consist of a 45-minute lecture followed by a short break and then another 45-minute lecture. A phenomenon referred to as a "practice" class constitutes another pair. Practice class is two 45-minute sessions, and consists of a small group discussion of assigned work taught by the professor or graduate assistants. Although it varies by subject, the number of mathematics lecture hours is usually greater than or equal to the number of practice hours. Graduate assistants in the USSR, like those in the U. S., are working on advanced degrees and need not have any prior teaching experience. However, Soviet graduate assistants are usually USSR citizens with a command of the native language, unlike the situation in the U. S., where 47 percent are foreign nationals with English as a second language (Connors, 1990).

The curriculum in Table 1 outlines a Soviet mathematics major's program at SSU. (College catalogs are not available in the USSR). It also includes a list of courses by year, with the estimated number of equivalent U. S. credit hours. In order to allow a more comprehensive comparison of mathematics lecture hours, all class time has been converted to clock hours. The curriculum is mandated by the Ministry of Education, so there are no elective courses. Thus, based upon Table 1, a mathematics major completes the equivalent of 146 U. S. credit hours of mathematics and science in the five-year span!

Table 1
Undergraduate Requirements for Soviet Mathematics Majors
(Five-Year Span)

Course	Clock Hours	Credit Hours
First Year:		
Analytic Geometry	79	6
Algebra (Linear & Abstract)	155	12
Mathematical Logic	38	3
First or Second Year:		
Math Analysis (Calculus)	281	21
Computers	79	6
Second Year:		
Theory of Probability	60	5
Differential Equations	98	7
Topology	41	3
Differential Geometry	38	3
Second or Third Year:		
Functional Analysis	119	9
Third Year:		
History of Mathematics	38	3
Functions of Complex Variables	59	5
Math Physics	69	6
Third or Fourth Year:		
Physics	100	7
Numeral Mathematics	119	9
Fourth Year:		
Automatic Systems of Managing	29	3
Theoretical Mechanics	88	6
Operations Research	38	3
Methods of Optimization	57	5
Special Courses--Fifth Year:		
Asymptotic Methods		
Theory of Stability		
Theory of Oscillations		
All Special Courses	309	24
Total		146

Course Final Examinations

In January and in June SSU students take final examinations in their courses over a three-week period. Students receive questions and topics to study written by the professor. On the day of the examination the students select two or three questions at random from this list. Students are given 40 minutes to answer the questions. The examination is immediately scored, and the student has the opportunity to discuss the solutions with the professor. At this time, the professor may also ask the student to expand on any response. A student who fails an examination may appeal to the Dean on the day of the examination. If a student passes all the other mathematics examinations, the student is usually permitted to retake the examination. If a student fails an examination on the first try, a stipend will not be received for the next month. A student who fails a second time or fails examinations in two areas will be asked to leave school.

A student may take a leave of absence. After leaving the university a student may reenter at the same point within the next two years. However, the student must reenter within a five-year span.

Technology

During the past several years, there has been considerable advancement in computer science. Presently, the USSR makes more than 20 types of microcomputers, with capabilities similar to those manufactured by the U. S. or Japan, but generally of poorer quality and reliability. Personal computers are still nonexistent. The computer languages taught at SSU are BASIC, FORTRAN, ALGOL, and Pascal. Computers are not used frequently by SSU students outside of mathematics, physics, and engineering. According to the guidelines established by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in 1986 concerning the restructuring of Soviet higher and specialized secondary education, more computers are to be incorporated into the study program (*Pravda*, 1987; Dobson, 1987). Calculators in schools were also nonexistent; common four-function calculators can be purchased, but still at a substantial cost (approximately $85 U. S.).

Candidates and Doctors of Science

Upon graduation, only the finest students are recommended by the university faculty for graduate work. (The USSR does not have a degree equivalent to a U. S. master's degree). Mathematics graduate students receive stipends which vary according to their last income. For example, a graduate student admitted to study directly after finishing the university would receive 100 rubles per month (approximately $169 U. S.); but students who have worked prior to beginning graduate studies receive 150 rubles (approximately $254 U. S.). The salary of an assistant professor is only 320 rubles per month (approximately $540 U. S.).

Candidates of Science

To become a Candidate of Science (a degree equivalent to a U. S. doctorate), one usually studies an additional three-to-four years beyond the undergraduate level. A Candidate of Science writes a 100-to-500-page thesis with numerous references (100 references is quite common) under the guidance and supervision of a Doctor of Science (Professor) or an experienced Candidate of Science (Assistant Professor). An oral defense of this thesis is made before the Specialized Scientific Council, which is appointed by the All Union High Level Certification Commission. This latter commission is under the auspices of the Prime Minister of the Council of Ministers in Moscow. The Specialized Scientific Council meets once or twice per month to consider requests from graduate students to become Candidates of Science. It is comprised of a minimum of three professors with specialities in the dissertation area along with twenty other professors and assistant professors who research in related fields. Not all Councilors are from the same university.

A summary of approximately 20 pages is sent to all major state libraries, universities, and institutes. Two individuals, one a Doctor of Science and the other a Candidate of Science or another Doctor of Science, are appointed either by the Special Scientific Council or the Top Qualifying Commission of the Ministry of Education to write a paper in opposition to the thesis. They are from different universities with neither from the same university as the author of the thesis. A secret vote is then taken by the commission. The ballots, protocol, and summary are sent to the All Union High Level Certification Commission to be accepted or rejected.

Doctor of Science

The process for obtaining a Doctor of Science is similar to that of a Candidate of Science, but much more rigorous. The thesis for a doctor of Science is usually a 200-to-300-page book, and must open a "new branch of mathematics" or at least attempt to do so. This work must be done entirely alone and not in consultation with anyone else. Once again a summary is written and three Doctors of Science are chosen to write papers in opposition to the thesis. The All Union High Level Certification Commission votes to accept or reject the thesis. The results and summaries are then sent to the Commission for a final decision. A Doctor of Science must also have articles published in prestigious journals such as *News of the Academy of Science* and *Highest Education*. There are approximately 10,000 new Candidates of Science in all fields of study and 1,000 Doctors of Science each year. It should be noted that, unlike the U. S., the university is not the primary source for fundamental research. In fact, "no more than 10 percent of all Soviet scientific research is conducted in higher educational institutions, even though they employ about a third of all scientific research personnel and half of all persons with doctorates" (Dobson, 1987, 10). Furthermore, this research is primarily conducted in the major universities such as Moscow State University.

Every five years, all professors at the university level must study three to four months under prominent professors. They attend lectures, take examinations, write papers, and engage in research. In addition, every five years all associate and full professors' positions become vacant. That is, the position is advertised and anyone qualified may apply. However, one's position is usually safe if the Dean judges that the job has been performed adequately.

Conclusion

Of the United States' 200,000 secondary mathematics teachers, more than 50 percent do not meet the current professional standards for their mathematics teaching responsibilities. In addition, it is estimated that less than 10 percent of elementary school teachers meet the standard qualifications for teaching mathematics (Luciano, 1990). In light of these alarming figures, we would suggest that educators consider the following:

1. The current emphasis in American general education for all college students clearly has an impact on the number of credit hours a student can take in his(her) discipline. Thus, our students are not as well prepared for graduate work in mathematics as Soviet students and many other foreign students. More time needs to be spent studying mathematics and science at the undergraduate level by mathematics majors.

2. In the USSR, academic achievement is being rewarded by full payment of college costs and a stipend. In the U. S., a major criterion for financial aid is need. This often diminishes the role of academic performance when it comes to receiving financial aid. Let's put scholarly work back into the awarding of scholarships.

3. Recent reports by the Carnegie Forum and the Holmes Group call for increasing the standards for teachers and for abolishing the undergraduate major in education (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1986; Holmes Group, 1986). We strongly feel that the content backgrounds of preservice mathematics teachers needs to be strengthened.

This article has tried to give some insight into the process of the university training of a mathematician in the USSR. The process is demanding and an important part of the Soviet success in mathematics. It is our hope that American educators will carefully review it and consider aspects of it as a model to emulate.

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